

**APRIL / MAY NEWSLETTER**

As many of you know, our beloved Cece is getting married this month. Congratulations Cece and Aaron!!!!!!! So *yours truly* will be hosting this month’s newsletter – you lucky stiffs!

As the yahoo groups list serv proved – training weekend was a huge success! Lots of good information, training and times shared by all! Once again, THANK YOU – to all involved!

Warmer weather is upon us – as some of us familiarized ourselves with on Marathon Monday (see the following race reports from Mary Dyan, Kierstyn Claycomb, and Moi) and that means training more and more outdoors! Walden-, Stiles- or “your favorite pond-” swimming, bike rides along roads with blooming flowers (lilacs!), running in the daylight! So much FUN!!!

So, why do it alone? Looking for a workout buddy? Tired of training in the same area? Send an email to the team – [team\\_envision@yahoogroups.com](mailto:team_envision@yahoogroups.com). Many times, training buddies are lurking around the corner and the only way to find out is to send an email! So go on, chat it up!

After the training comes the racing, and some of our TEers have already been out there! Cherry and Kristen talk about their most recent multisport race experiences and Will and Jason from Tri Hard have some good pointers for staying strong and getting ready!

With that said, anyone who has a story to tell, please send it on to Cece – your teammates love reading your race reports as much as you love reading theirs!

Well I better stop writing now so you have time to read this newsletter....

Enjoy!  
Beth

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## **BOSTON MARATHON 2004 – RACE REPORT BY MARY DYAN**

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It's a beautiful, sunny, summery day today as I write this race report. I went for a 6 mile run at lunch time and I think the thermometer read "75 degrees". As I sweated out the run, I reflected that on Monday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, Marathon Monday, it was 10 whole degrees warmer. I wondered to myself how I and the other TE members were able to complete a marathon in those conditions and I have to say the conclusion I came up with is simply: WE ROCK!!

I'd love to be able to write this and say I took all that I had learned from my first marathon experience in Philadelphia and applied it to this race. But this just would not be true. I did learn more about race day nutrition and applied that knowledge and there was no way I could have survived the race without stopping for water and Gatorade at every stop. But I think that is where my live and learn strategy ended.

Race day started bright and early with a bus trip out to Hopkinton at 8:00AM. It never ceases to amaze me how intimidating that drive is (we did this a lot during training too). But it seems like we're in the car/bus for a VERY long time and it seems an impossibly long distance to run back. Anyway, once at the Athletes' Village, we sought seats on the grass and in the shade and relaxed. I underestimated the port-o-john lines and went for what I thought would be by second to last trip at around 10:45. Well, no one can say the cops on bush patrol with their guns at the ready to catch any offenders were not doing their job. The lines were SO long and slow. My second to last trip became my last (this seemingly minute detail becomes important later in the story). Before I knew it, it was time to put my bag on the bus and head to the starting corrals.

While I patiently waited the 23 minutes to cross the starting line (for anyone who knows me, the sarcasm here is probably glaringly obvious since I am not patient about anything!), I realized that I probably could have benefited from another trip to the port-o-johns. 23 minutes is a long time to have adrenaline surging through you and just too much time to think about everything, but eventually the time passed and we were OFF. I took off, as is my custom, like a bat out of hell and dodged people left and right to come across mile 1 at 7:52. Hmm. My race plan to run a steady 8:23/mile (to manage a 3:40) was not going so well! But I figured it was due to my impatience at the start and the fact that mile 1 is completely downhill.

I was feeling good and did not know how long it would last, so decided to soak up the Boston marathon experience right from the start in case by the middle or end I would be completely incoherent and incapable of appreciating the great atmosphere. So for at least the first ½ of the race, I was high fiving little kids on the sidelines with my sweaty, sticky (from the gallons of Gatorade that never seemed to make it directly into my mouth, more of an up-the-nose or all-over-my-body kind of thing) hands and thanked as many people as I could for shouting "Go Mary" (background on this: I wanted my name on my shirt, so a friend suggested cutting out the letters using duct tape and sticking them on so as not to ruin a nice running shirt. Well, we bought fun RED duct tape and Eamon, my husband, painstakingly, and very well, I might add, cut out the letters. We went to stick

them on my shirt and whatever that material is that wicks away sweat also does not allow things to be stuck to it. So Eamon sewed the letters on for me.).

I was also conscious of the fact I had to pee, so as I passed every port-o-john I would hope for no line, see that there was a line and make my way to the next one...never actually did find one with no line...☺

By about mile 15, I started to regret my quick start, but was still doing OK. My quads were noticeably tight and I did worry about cramping, but as there was not much I could do about it, I just kept running. I knew I would know people at various points along the course, but it did get kind of confusing with my name on my shirt because it was hard to tell if people were yelling, "Go Mary" because they knew me or because it was across my chest. I did see a friend in Wellesley and then one right at the start of the hills who was working a water stop and screamed, "Go Mary Dyan" so I knew it was her.

The hills went fine though my pace had definitely slowed. I have to admit, the one thing I never tired of was running through the garden hoses. A *Slip N Slide* would have been very welcome, too to make the feeling of being a kid again complete. But as I struggled up the hills, it was hard for me to keep taking in enough liquid to not feel thirsty anymore (and I was SO good, stopping at every water stop and taking 2-3 cups of either water or Gatorade, again, for those of you who know how I race, I am very bad about stopping for liquids! Oh, I need to add in that I did take TWO GUs--Andrea Wolf, these would have been proud moments for you as my GU Guru--throughout the race!). But somehow, I made it to the top of the hills and ran past the old Alma Mater (Go BC!) was a great experience (mmm, the smell of beer!).

As I approached mile 23, Audrey jumped in with some red Gatorade (because I said it was my favorite) but being the ingrate I am, all I could say was "No, I want WATER". She still ran with me to mile 24 (Thanks, Audrey) and there I saw my BC friends and Eamon with some of his friends. One of my friends had a wet wash cloth and it was honestly the best feeling to wipe my face off with that, I think that kept me going to the finish, thanks Kelly!

The last two miles were probably the longest though the sheer volume of spectators definitely helped. But at this point, I became obsessed with my watch and my time and as I rounded the corner onto Boylston, I realized I was going to be VERY close to a qualifying time. Not wanting a repeat of Philly where I missed it by seconds, I dug deep and "sprinted" (I use this term loosely, but relative to the people around me, it did look quite dramatic, I imagine) to the finish and even at the line, my photo is of me crossing and looking right at my watch: 3:40:41. Phew.

I was not even sweating anymore, so I took about 6 bottles of water from the nice volunteers and made my way to the friends and family area. Alyssa met me there, after just having flown back from London where she ran the marathon there the day before (26.2 kilometers? ha ha). We then headed to Flash's to meet other members of the team (and my sister!) and to kick back some cold, refreshing beverages. It was there that I

realized what I thought was a lovely sock tan was actually left over from running through the hoses and kicking mud all over myself!

Thanks to Team Envision for allowing me the chance to participate in this amazing race and for being so supportive throughout it all. I could not have even made it to the start line without the winter training runs and track workouts. It was one of the best winters I have ever had in New England.

## **BOSTON MARATHON 2004 BY KIERSTYN CLAYCOMB**

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What is there to say about the 2004 Boston Marathon...It was hot, really hot and I am sure people are probably tired of hearing about it. I for one am. It was a tough race, and it is already a tough course in cool weather.

I got a ride to the start and ended up walking around for an hour. I had to get my bag on the gear check bus (which of course was the last bus about a mile away), find a bathroom without a 3 mile long line and try to stay cool and relax (easier said than done)! By the time I entered my bin I was soaked with sweat. I knew then that it was going to be a long day.

The first 5 miles were okay, downhill and on pace. By mile 6 I didn't think I would make it. I was feeling overheated so I slowed my pace down, way down. I am happy I was comfortable with adjusting. A lot of people didn't adjust for the weather and suffered. I was moving from one side of the road to the other trying to get sprayed by every hose I could find, even though I knew that was a BAD idea. I'm a chafer, spray me with 100 hoses from Hopkinton to Boston, and who knows what could happen!

I was suffering. I was feeling awful. I have a hard time drinking fluids when I run. If I drink too much or too fast I feel nauseous. Unfortunately, my main goal was to stay hydrated and stay out of the medical tents. I drank water, fast and furiously! I felt so sick, but I was hydrated and that's all I could worry about. All I wanted was a can of Coke. I spent a lot of time crashing people's parties in their yards looking for a can of Coke. People thought I was crazy.

Approaching mile 13 I could hear the Wellesley girls. I have heard stories about them, but its one of those things you have to experience. For the mile approaching them and the miles passing them by, I felt like a million bucks, and that was the last time I felt like that the rest of the day.

At mile 15 a small girl ran in to the middle of the road to offer me a grape Popsicle. In my 27 years of life I have never had a gift so wonderful! I walked with that Popsicle and savored every last moment of it! I told her that she was the greatest and kept moving forward.

I was happy to be leaving Wellesley because I know my greatest friend/teammate/run support Chandra would be waiting for me at mile 18 to run the hills with me. Any friend who is willing to run the hills with you on a day like that is something else! She was there waiting with a huge smile and fresh water bottles, ice wrapped in a towel (yes the towel I made the fashion statement with), and jellybeans. She ran all through the hills with me just keeping me moving forward. By then my feet were so water logged from all the hoses. I had to stop a few times to take off my shoes and wring out my socks. The balls of my feet were raw and painful.

By mile 20 I started to feel a little crazy. I was saying crazy things. I think I was starting to dehydrate. I was also having a hard time with my Carb-BOOM because I was feeling really sick all day. My legs were starting to suffer but I knew I had only a few miles left, I couldn't quit now. Chandra was going to run to mile 22 with me but she was worried, I was acting crazy by then so she decided to stay with me to the finish. I couldn't be more indebted to her!

We made our way up Beacon St slow and steady. I saw so many people really suffering. By mile 23 I didn't want people to cheer any more, I just wanted to run. People kept telling me it was close but I knew it would be a very long 3 miles. I was exhausted physically and mentally. The medical tents at miles 23 and 24 were full.

Approaching the turn on to Boylston I stopped and decided I didn't want to run anymore, and I am stubborn. I fought with Chandra and eventually I started to move again. I made the turn on to Boylston and saw the finish. I actually had an anxiety attack! I couldn't breathe, so Chandra told me to run with my eyes closed until I could breathe again. So I ran up Boylston St. with my eyes shut tight gasping for air.

I crossed and immediately sat down to take off my shoes. The medics came rushing over because they thought I had collapsed so I had to convince them I was OK. I continued down Boylston barefoot with raw feet walking through smashed bananas and spilled yogurt drink when a guy walks by with an ice cold can of Coke. I thought I was hallucinating. I asked where he got it and he gave it to me. My day was complete!

It was a tough day both mentally and physically. I couldn't believe the amount of support out there. Had it not been for spectators with ice and water and oranges and Popsicles so many of us would have never made it. Isn't it funny in this day and age, people won't eat something that hasn't been triple vacuum sealed but on marathon Monday people will take anything from a perfect stranger! Everyone who ran that day was a true winner! And I am happy to report only minor chafing!

The best part of the marathon was the training! The group of Team Envision women who trained through the ice cold and snow were truly inspirational! I have already decided to run for charity next year.

And congrats to Mary Dyan who in my mind is truly spectacular!!!

## **BOSTON MARATHON 2004 BY BETH BLAKE**

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Desperate and vulnerable. That is the best way to describe my experience at the 85° F 2004 Boston Marathon! It was the worst yet strangely one of the best races of my life....

Before the start in Hopkinton – I was wiping sweat from my face. I kept reassuring myself that even though I was sweating now, I would cool off once I started running. Glad that I had excessively hydrated from the Thursday before the race, I kept telling myself that I was prepared for anything and that I loved the sun.

It took a little over 20 minutes to cross the start line – but when I did, I relaxed, tried to slow my pace, and settled into a groove.

But by mile 9, things got ugly. Fellow runners were going down. A stretcher pulled a confused, pale, young man off the course. I'm not going to lie – I was scared! If he went down, who was to say that I or any of my friends out on the course wouldn't?!

Luckily, my friend Brian (a.k.a. Heather Shand's Brother-in-Law) from Tri Fury ran by me and chatted with me for a bit. But his pace was too fast for me and my 10-minute miles were starting to get harder. I left him at a water stop – relieved but sad to continue on without a buddy.

The heat was really starting to get to me. My legs felt as if someone deflated all the energy out of them. But I was coming up on mile 11 and I knew my parents and Joe (my boyfriend) would be cheering me on somewhere after the marker. Originally, I had thought that the water at every mile would be plenty, but "Paranoid Beth" asked Joe to bring my Fuel Belt – just in case. I was so desperate for water at that point and so glad I had made that decision.

"There's my parents and Joe," I shrieked with excitement in my head!

I could barely blurt out, "Fuel Belt!" Joe looked at me helplessly, "I forgot it!" The look on my face must've put daggers in his heart because all I could see was how apologetic his face looked.

I calmed myself down after I passed him and reminded myself that he's human and just plain forgot. It's not as if he was maliciously holding my Fuel Belt hostage.

Trudging on, I promised myself to relax, slow down and DRINK!

All I could think about was moving forward. I had tunnel vision of the mantra "One foot in front of the other." It wasn't my typical marathon attitude of singing songs, talking to other runners along the way and enjoying the day. I was focused on one thing – finishing. And not on a stretcher!

Wellesley came and went; it was a total blur to be honest. Drinking 2 cups of water at times; slowing to run-walk. I saw more of my fellow runners down for the day – some being wheeled off the course, others staggering off.

Then, I met my guardian angel! Some kind soul outside of Newton-Wellesley Hospital gave me her Poland Spring water bottle. I do not know who this woman is but her kindness and generosity gave me a rejuvenated energy. I thanked her profusely and for the first time all day had a huge grin on my face. I held onto this bottle the remainder of the race. We even had our finisher picture taken together. ;)

The water bottle incident proved to be perfect timing because I was approaching the hills (miles 18-21). I love hills. I know many of you think I am sick and twisted for feeling this way but I have trained, time and time again on the hills. I felt as if I was at home. I was so ready for this part of the course.

I flew up the hills. Okay maybe that is not really what happened but in my mind, that is how I felt.

I must've been hallucinating by the last hill, because I felt like I was at the end of a mountain stage in the Tour de France. Fans crowded the runners coming up the hills; colors of flags and signs waved in my face; shouts of encouragement rang in my ears. Then I realized I was not on a bike, this was not the Tour, and it was definitely not the end of a mountain stage.

But oddly, I started to feel really good. I was starting to cool off. I realized that I had less than a mile until I saw my parents and Joe again, and about 5 miles left of the race. I was going to finish. It may not be pretty or my best time, but I was going to finish.

By mile 22, people were walking. No one was running. I have never seen anything like it. At that moment I felt the need to run. Maybe it was because I needed to feel like I was alive or maybe it was because I could almost see the finish line.

I thought of my friends out on the course. I wondered if they were okay and how they were doing.

I finished the last 3 miles of the course with my friend Brian – it was so good to see a familiar face. And since we sort of started together, it made sense that we finished together.



Side note: Many of you are familiar with my donut obsession. About a week before the race, an email entitled, “Race for the Glazed” found its way into my Inbox. It was a challenge from Brian – whoever finished the race first, owed the other a box of Krispy Kreme donuts.

When I saw Brian, I realized there was a chance I would have to buy him donuts! I caught up to him and said, “If we cross the finish line together, then we could just split a box.” He pointed out that he started after me so if we crossed together he would owe me a box. Hmmmm, Not bad at all!

The remainder of the course, “peer pressure” as Brian called it (I prefer the word camaraderie), kept us moving. We ran together and kept each other moving. And just like that, Boylston Street snuck up on us. We crossed the line together (of course with my Poland Spring Water Bottle in tow) – it was such an awesome moment of sportsmanship and camaraderie!

After thoughts:

This is my fourth marathon – I have never experience such an emotionally, mentally and physically challenging and draining athletic event, ever! I can’t even imagine what people in serious need (terminally ill, suffering, starving, etc.) must go through every day.

I am glad to have experienced this race. I feel it will be good preparation for life in general and my next big goal in July – Ironman USA.

I know many feel that running isn’t a “team sport” but honestly, I relied on many of you more than you will ever know. No matter how strong of an individual you are, your “teammates” can help you reach new levels or get through tough times. I would just like to give a special “thank you” to all the people who supported me before, during and after the race. Knowing you were behind me kept me going and reminded me that I have so many wonderful people in my life! For those who were out on the course – I can’t even begin to describe how much energy your presence gave me, (even if I didn’t see you)!

I’ve learned that no matter how strong and independent you are there is something about seeing your parents after a tough day that makes you breakdown and cry.

And to answer the most popular question: Yes, I will do another marathon. Why not?!

## **6 STEPS TO A STRONG YEAR IN TRIATHLON**

**Jason Gootman, MS, CSCS & Will Kirousis, BS, CSCS**

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As we embark on a new year, many of you are feeling empowered to make this your best year yet in triathlon. Many of you are really looking to have a great year. This of course means something different to each of you, but nonetheless many of you are led to the question “What can I do to make this a great year?” Hopefully, you are already looking past the traps of quick, easy improvement promised by a piece of equipment or a single kind of workout and are ready to look at some ways to genuinely improve yourself in ways that will allow you to move faster than you currently can. If you are, here are 6

steps you can take to create personal success for yourself in triathlons this year; 6 steps to help you become a faster triathlete!

## **1. Identify your reasons for racing triathlons.**

You need to ask yourself one very important question: Why am I doing this? Take some time and reflect on this question. If it helps you, let your thoughts out onto paper or discuss your thoughts with a friend, family member, or fellow triathlete also reflecting on his/her reasons for doing triathlons. There are no right or wrong reasons. It is just important to know your reasons. Ask yourself the following questions:

- a. What do I most enjoy about triathlon training and racing?
- b. What are the best feelings I get to experience in my triathlon training and racing?
- c. When I first “fell in love” with triathlon, what was it that felt so great?

Your answers to these questions will help you get closer to your personal core reasons for participating in triathlons. Your reflection may tug at your heart a bit and remind you what matters most to you about participating in triathlons. All together, this process can help you to find out or to remind yourself why you like triathlons so much and why you are looking to have a great year.

You may be wondering what the heck this has to do with racing faster. The answer is you need to know what is most important to you in triathlon in order to structure your training and racing in a way that will allow you to experience and achieve what matters to you. If you don't really know what matters to you, you can't really have any goals that have meaning to you. You will be left to pick goals out of thin air or to use someone else's goals. But by knowing what matters most to you about your participation in triathlons, you can deliberately go out and make it happen, consciously taking the steps you need to.

## **2. Create or assess your triathlon goals.**

From your personal reasons for participating in triathlon, you need to create your goals for the season. There is a great deal of very good information written about creating good goals. A simple summary of good goal setting advice would be to set specific, positive, challenging but realistic, and personally meaningful goals. A full discussion of goal setting is beyond the scope of this article. We want to emphasize the personally meaningful aspect. In our coaching of triathletes, we come across many folks who make their goals based on what they feel they are *supposed* to do. We also come across many folks who look to us to help them create their goals. A good coach can help you to clarify your goals or to restructure them in ways that make them more appropriate and helpful, but the core of your goals needs to come from inside of you. We encourage you to create your goals based on the reasons you have identified as why YOU like to participate in triathlon. If you have already created goals for the year, assess them to make sure they are in line with your personal reasons. Doing so will help to ensure a year you can look back on with a sense of joy and satisfaction.

### **3. Train with direction.**

From your well-established goals, you need to train in a purposeful manner to help you to reach your goals. Simply “putting in the miles” or mindlessly following the workouts of your friends or local training groups may bring improvement in the short-term, but will lead to a plateau in your abilities rather quickly. Instead, carefully assess your current abilities and what stands between your current abilities and the abilities you need to have to reach your goals. From there, create a plan of action that will help you to develop as you need to. If you need help with this, consider reading some of the good books available on triathlon and endurance sports training or consider working with a triathlon coach who can help to provide this direction for you.

### **4. Create health-enhancing lifestyle habits.**

Health and performance are not two separate entities, but rather two qualities that go hand-in-hand. The healthier you are, the better you perform. Two major areas that impact your health tremendously are your sleep habits and your nutrition habits.

With regards to sleep, you should aim to get a minimum of 8-9 hours of sound sleep per night. Many ambitious triathletes sacrifice sleep in order to complete more training either early in the morning or late in the evening. Obviously, you need to train in order to improve, but when the amount of training you are doing is limiting your ability to get enough sleep each night, you are fighting a losing battle. Hormonally, you simply need ample, quality sleep in order to improve as an athlete. The physiological changes that occur and allow you to improve and move faster will only happen when you consistently sleep well. We have often seen athletes improve substantially when taking out some of their training and sleeping more. Even though they were then training less, their bodies were better able to adapt to their training and they improved at a greater rate.

With regards to nutrition, you should aim to eat high quality nutritious foods throughout each day. Eating well does not have to be complicated. If you regularly consume whole, natural foods you will be assured of getting all the nutrients you need to support great health and your quest for improved performance. A few simple steps will help you in eating well:

- a. Base your meals and snacks around vegetables, fruits, meats, nuts/seeds, and whole grains/whole grain foods.
- b. Eat every 3-5 hours throughout the day to supply yourself with a steady incoming stream of nutrients.
- c. Eat breakfast.
- d. Drink water throughout the day.

While improving your nutrition habits, we encourage you to assign yourself a weekly nutrition task each week just as you would program your training. Your role each week is to execute this task just as you will execute your training. This allows you to gradually create better eating habits. A few examples of weekly nutrition tasks are:

- a. I will eat three large salads this week.
- b. When I go food shopping this week, I will stock my pantry with healthy foods like canned beans, canned tuna, whole grain pasta, wild rice, almonds, and cashews.
- c. I will eat a piece of fish for dinner two nights this week.

## **5. Consciously train your movement efficiency.**

How efficiently you move when you swim, bike, and run is a very large determining factor in how fast a rate you can maintain in a triathlon. You will only move as fast as you are efficient. Both your ability to exert great amounts of force in sport specific movement patterns (sport specific strength/power) and your levels of aerobic and anaerobic endurance directly impact the rate at which you can travel in a triathlon. Triathletes commonly train these factors whereas consciously training movement efficiency is often neglected, despite its significant role in determining what speed we can maintain in a triathlon. We suggest making training your movement efficiency a larger priority. In fact, we suggest that you never train simply to gain strength/power or endurance at the expense of movement efficiency. If you need help with how to train your movement efficiency in triathlon, consider working with a coach who can help you to do so or consider reading some of the good teaching materials available. The materials of swim coach Terry Laughlin (to learn more go to [www.totalimmersion.net](http://www.totalimmersion.net)) and run coach Nicholas Romanov (to learn more go to [www.posetech.com](http://www.posetech.com)) are unique in their ability to help virtually anyone self-coach themselves to enhanced movement efficiency in swimming and running. For enhanced cycling efficiency, we suggest first working with an experienced bike fitter to ensure that you are suited to your bicycle in a biomechanical sense and then working on both your pedaling and bike handling skills each time your ride.

## **6. Rest as eagerly as you train.**

Training without resting adequately is like trying to pour water into a cup with holes in the bottom; you just won't make any progress. Most triathletes are aware of this, but many ignore it. If you really want to improve this year, we offer the following suggestions for better resting:

- a. Every 3-6 weeks, take a Recovery Week where you train at 50% or less of your training load in your other weeks.
- b. Every week, take at least one Rest Day where you perform no training.
- c. When possible take a Total Rest Day where you perform no training, no work, and no chores. Sounds crazy, but what you do that day is REST. This is often most possible on a weekend day during a Recovery Week.
- d. If you are racing quite a bit, consider a mid-season break somewhere in the summer after a heavy period of racing. Take a week or two away from structured training and triathlon in general. If possible, you can take this break at the same time you take a family vacation. This can recharge your batteries and allow you to continue racing strongly in the later summer and fall.

- e. Try not to think of resting as “doing nothing”. Many achievement oriented people get hung up on feeling like they are “doing nothing” when they are resting. Instead, try to think of resting as the act of resting which is a very positive “action” that leads to greater health and performance.

We hope that this advice gives you some help in creating a great year for yourself!

*Jason Gootman MS, CSCS and Will Kirousis BS, CSCS coach endurance athletes of all levels, write for conditioning related magazines/journals, and provide educational services for private and professional groups about optimizing endurance sports performance through their company Tri-Hard Sports Conditioning Systems. Jason and Will, USA Triathlon and USA Cycling Certified Coaches, can be reached with questions or comments through their website [www.tri-hard.com](http://www.tri-hard.com) or via email at [jason@tri-hard.com](mailto:jason@tri-hard.com) and [will@tri-hard.com](mailto:will@tri-hard.com) respectively.*

### **WRENTHAM DUATHLON: DU #2 BY CHERRY GREINER** [cadgreiner@yahoo.com](mailto:cadgreiner@yahoo.com)

It's been 8 months since my first duathlon and I had been itching to do another one when spring finally came. I decided to do an early season race, Wrentham Duathlon, to gauge my winter training and current performance. It's been tough consistently training this winter after I decided to return to school part-time. My long runs were not as long and I missed indoor track due to conflicts in my schedule. The only speed work I've done up to that point were a few fartleks. As for biking in the winter, I have been using the indoor bike trainer and attended a few of Team Envision's indoor bike training (Thanks Maura!). So although I'm a runner, I was actually looking forward to the bike portion of the race and couldn't wait to hop on the bike --- certainly a contrast to my first duathlon.

Race day, 6:00 am ... temperature 40 degrees. I knew it was going to be cold that morning but I didn't expect it to be that cold. Running in 40 degree weather is not a problem for me but what about the biking?!? Though I've been riding outside a few weeks before the race, the weather's been above 50 degrees (at least!). I'm hoping it will warm-up by race start, though I'm not taking any chances. That morning, I scrambled for extra layers of clothing and stuffed them in my backpack. Finally, I got to the race. I'm sure the temperature was warmer but the wind also picked up. Everyone seemed to be complaining about the cold weather and discussing what article of clothing to keep during the race. I decided to shed my wind jacket and pants for the run and left it next to my bike, just in case.

Race start, 8:00 am. Ran the first run leg faster than expected, but I still felt I had lots of energy for the rest of the race. *Mental note #1: Maybe practice pacing. I should sign up for some 10k and/or half-marathon races.* Fist transition went relatively ok. I scrambled a bit trying to find my bike! *Mental note #2: Count how many bike racks I need to run by to find my bike ... or I could get a flashier bike ☺ (ok as a grad student, I'll settle for a flashier tape for my handlebars!).* Swallowed some GU, strapped my helmet on and

hopped on the bike. Oh yes, the temperature warmed up in time for the bike ride so things seemed to be going well, so far.

I checked the course profile for the bike beforehand and expected most of the hills will be in the first few miles. Riding higher gears and practicing high cadence during indoor bike training gave me some confidence in tackling the hills. I remembered pacing myself well on the first half of the ride, however I remembered being overly cautious on the bike portion of my first duathlon, so I decided to push myself on the second half. Unfortunately I think I overdid it! *Mental note #3 and #4: Next time, bring Gatorade instead of water for the bike ride. Most importantly, don't forget to save some energy for the last run!*

I knew my legs would be sluggish within the first 5 to 10 minutes of the second run, but this time around they felt like they were really out of juice. I focused on the guy ahead of me and noticed that he was barely lifting his feet, shuffling as he ran. "Can't be that hard to over take him", or so I thought. Few minutes later, he's just as far ahead of me as when I started. It hit me ... if he's shuffling his feet and I haven't passed him, I must also be shuffling my feet just as slowly! The last mile was mentally tough, but I convinced myself to keep moving and tried not to lose sight of the shuffling buddy. Although I was a bit disappointed with my second run, I was glad to finish and even managed to "sprint" a bit as I crossed the finish line with a smile on my face.

Overall, I am happy that I did an early season race. As a beginner to multi-sports, I learned a lot from the Wrentham Duathlon. It gave me an idea of what elements are missing in my training and further stressed the value of long run/bike rides, speedwork, brick workouts and most importantly, pacing. I look forward to improving my training for the rest of the season!

## **FIRSTS BY KRISTEN JURCSAK**

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When it comes down to it, life is full of "firsts." As they say, there's a first time for everything. When we're young children, there are lots of firsts, but it's our parents not us that recognize these stepping stones as accomplishments. We're just doing kid stuff. No big deal. As we get a little older and "grow up" (although I think that's a relative term and I don't believe anyone should ever think of themselves as "all grown up"), we begin to think of our first times as mile markers in life – I know I do. Both good and bad, I've learned from every one of my "first times" and many, without question, have altered the path I've taken from that point forward.

On May 16, 2004, I completed my first triathlon. Not only was it my first triathlon, but it was my first official race of any kind – ever. It certainly wasn't the Ironman, but to me it was one of those experiences that will definitely impact the rest of my life. The race was short – 1/8 mile swim, 10 mile bike, and 3.5 mile run, but I wanted to start small and have a good first experience with the sport. I knew I was well prepared for this distance and finished in 1:20:13, which was under my hour and a half goal. Most importantly, it

was fun and I had the privilege of doing the race with three of my teammates who cheered me on as I crossed the finish line. Completing this race proved to me yet again that the only limits for me are the ones I set for myself. If I put my mind and training efforts to meeting a goal, I'll get there. And maybe, eventually, with a lot of hard work and dedication, it will be an Ironman someday. It's definitely true that I value most what I work hardest for.

I am not a natural athlete by any stretch and my path to a fit and healthy lifestyle has been a five year transformation process. It's truly been just that, a process that has not always come easy and at times has proven to be quite frustrating. It's been a gradual series of small attitude and habit changes coming together to make up major attitude and habit changes combined with many long hours of working out and many days of sore muscles. I remember like it was yesterday my *very* first spinning class where a close and extremely patient friend said, "Just pace yourself. You don't have to do everything the instructor does. Your goal is to finish the class. You'll be fine." Mind you, this was a one hour beginner's spin class (talk about starting small). And with that same friend and his wife, I remember my first group road ride (on my mountain bike with slick tires) that really started this whole thing. Then a short two years and several thousand miles on my new road bike later, my first bike tour and my first century. Every year, I've gotten stronger and better in some way. Every year I've raised the bar and pushed myself farther. And every year I've been successful. So when I started thinking about training for a triathlon last fall and found out about Team Envision, it just seemed like the next logical step and the next logical first. I wanted this.

I am continuously impressed with the "can do" attitude that surrounds Team Envision and the constant encouragement and inspiration we give each other every day. Seeing my teammates achieve milestones and personal bests is inspirational and makes me realize that I, too, can reach the goals I set for myself. As people, I don't think I've ever met a friendlier and more supportive group of women anywhere. So thank you all for helping me train for my first triathlon. Now like all of you, triathlon is part of my life.

## **PLAN FOR SUCCESS**

**Jason Gootman, MS, CSCS & Will Kirousis, BS, CSCS**

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Triathlon is a tremendous endurance challenge. You put months and years of thought, effort, and training into improving your athletic abilities. Yet despite your well-organized training, a haphazard approach on race day could ruin your plans for peak performance. So how can you make sure this does not happen? How can you assure success? With a simple Race Plan!

By taking a well-planned and focused approach to your races, you avoid problems on race day and are more likely to reach your goals.

So what exactly is a Race Plan? A Race Plan is an organizational tool for approaching the various aspects of racing. There are many ways to create a Race Plan and in this article we will give you one way we have seen athletes like you have tremendous success with. We will describe the key components of a Race Plan, show you how to construct a Race Plan, and provide you with a sample Race Plan.

### ***Key Components of a Race Plan***

Goals: Reviewing your goals for your race is the first step in formulating a sound race plan. There are two main goals you should have for the event, time goals and experience goals. The following statement describes a very specific time goal “I will complete IM Florida in 10:45”. “I will enjoy the experience from start to finish” or “I will remain mentally strong throughout the race” are good examples of experience goals and are equally important to a successful event. The goals you set for your peak race should be in line with your overall athletic goals and vision.

Goal Split Times & Pacing Strategy: Once your overall race time goal is established, you can establish your time goals for each segment of the race. You will want to set a time goal for the swim, T1, the bike, T2, and the run. Your goal times for each segment of the race should be based on a number of factors like: times achieved in recent races, results of recent performance testing, and estimations of the course’s terrain impact on performance. While developing goal times for each segment of the race, you should base this off of your goal pace. For example, if you know from your recent races, performance tests, and training sessions that you can sustain a running pace of 6:50/mile in a ½ Marathon, you can sustain 7:15/mile in a Running Sustainable Speed Test, and you can sustain a pace of 8:10-8:30/mile when running after long rides in your bricks, then you may set a goal of running at 8:10-8:30/mile for the run segment of your upcoming race. You and/or your coach should work to create a realistic yet challenging race pace strategy that will foster your best overall time.

Nutrition Strategy: Next in creating your Race Plan, you need to develop your personal race day nutrition strategy. This means deciding what you will eat and drink during each appropriate segment of your race day: race morning breakfast, pre-race, T1, bike segment, T2, run segment, and post-race. This plan needs to be formulated based on science and practice. You can use scientific knowledge and formulas to approximate your nutrient needs. A coach or sports nutritionist can help you with this. Using this science and these approximations, you then need to refine your race day nutrition strategy based on personal experimentation during training and racing. You are your best research subject. Your experience is vital to determine the right amounts, timing, and foods/fluids that work well for you. As a result, it is vital that you develop a strategy and practice it.

Mental Strategy: Last, you need to plan out specific mental strategies that you want to “carry” with you during the race. A good place to start in formulating your mental

strategy is to look back in your memory a bit. Think back to your best performances. What focus did you have? What attitude did you carry with you? What were you thinking about or not thinking about that opened you up to have these great performances? After some thought, you should be able to generate a list of emotions, thoughts, and actions that have led you to success in the past. You can use this list to create concrete mental strategies for your race day.

### ***Constructing Your Race Plan***

It is very important to remember that your Race Plan is very unique to you. Your Race Plan should be structured around YOUR goals, YOUR fitness, YOUR experience, and the way that YOU approach triathlon. Resist the temptation to formulate your plan based on a friend's hopes, dreams, and thoughts for the same race. You are most likely to be happy with your performance if you did it for you!

Beginning to construct your Race Plan is as simple as designing a computer table (those in Microsoft Word and Excel work very well). You will need five columns and nine rows. Leave some space at the top for your overall race goals. *(A sample of a race plan is shown below to demonstrate the format and provide ideas on how to formulate the specific strategies.)*

You should construct your plan about 8-16 weeks away from your peak races. Much before that and you will not know enough about your developing fitness to realistically project paces. Much after that and you may not have enough time to thoroughly practice the components of your Race Plan in training.

Don't expect to set your Race Plan in stone. You should consider it a working document. In the last 8-16 weeks as you come to peak form, you will learn more about your fitness, how you handle various nutritional approaches, and what mental strategies help you the most. You and/or your coach should be ready to adjust and adapt this plan as needed to set the best approach for you on race day.

Your Race Plan is not something that you just establish and then leave alone. Your training should be designed to bring about the conditioning improvements needed to reach the performance goal you have set for yourself. But you also need to practice the various pacing, nutritional, and mental strategies that you plan to use in your race during training. For example, if as part of your nutritional strategy you have decided to drink Gatorade at a rate of two bottles per hour during the bike ride, you should be practicing this in your training rides whenever possible. This helps to make it second nature and to make sure this strategy will not upset your stomach. This is very important because it can be extremely easy to get carried away with emotions on race day. And when you do that, it is pretty easy to forget or ignore important tasks of racing that will assure your success. If you have a great plan for the race AND HAVE PRACTICED IT WELL, you will keep your emotions in check more easily and be well prepared to race YOUR race on the big day.

## Sample Race Plan

The following is a sample race plan that we used successfully with one of our clients who raced IM Florida.

*Note: the approaches taken in this sample Race Plan are unique to this individual and were developed over time and with practice. They are not idea for everyone and your actual strategies should be personalized to you. They are offered simply as an example of format.*

Race:  
IM Florida

Goals:

I will complete IM Florida in 10:45 or less.

I will enjoy the experience from start to finish.

I will remain mentally strong throughout the race.

	Goal Time	Pacing Strategy	Nutrition Strategy	Mental Strategy
Breakfast	N.A.	N.A.	I will eat at 4:30—2.5 hours prior to the race start. I will eat my regular pre-race breakfast: 2 scrambled eggs 2 cups oatmeal with tbsp. of honey & ¼ cup of raisins.	I will relax. I will take the time to have a good meal and start my day off by loading up with some good fuel. I will remind myself of my goals and the most important reasons I am here today. I will remind myself that I am prepared for this and today all I have to do is go out and execute what I have prepared for. I will also remind myself of the attitude focus that I want to bring to this race—I want to enjoy my race from start to finish and remain mentally strong throughout the race.
Pre-Race	N.A.	N.A.	At 6:00am, I will start sipping Gatorade. I will continue this until I get into the water to warm-up.	I will stay relaxed. After I get body marked, I will stay away from the crowds. I will spend some time sitting quietly using the relaxation techniques I have practiced. When it is time to warm-up, I will head to the water and conduct my warm-up as I have practiced.
Swim	1H 5'	I will replicate the race pace swimming I have performed in practice many times. I will get in with a group of swimmers who are swimming my pace	N.A.	I will stay within myself. I will take long, strong strokes, and repeat to myself “long and strong”. I will focus only on what I am doing—my breathing, and my form.

		to share the effort.		
T1	3'	N.A.	None	As I perform my transition tasks, I will look around and enjoy the great spectacle around me. I will consciously draw on the energy of all the amazing people around me. I will enjoy how amazing doing an Ironman triathlon is.
Bike	6H	I will ride at average of 18.5-19.5 MPH throughout the race. In the early stages especially, I will restrain myself from the temptation of going faster.	After 15 minutes into the ride, I will start to drink my bottle of 24 oz. Metabolol. I will drink this and one 24 oz. bottle of Gatorade in the first hour. Each hour thereafter, I will drink two 24 oz. bottles of Gatorade and eat one half of a Clif Bar.	I will focus on my pedaling. I will focus on pedaling smoothly, powerfully, and efficiently. Especially as I fatigue, I will concentrate not on the fatigue but entirely on pedaling well. I will also keep at my goal pace—I will resist the temptation to go faster.
T2	2'	N.A.	None	As I perform my transition tasks, I will enjoy the emotion of the day. I will gather my excitement, as I know I have one marathon between me and finishing an Ironman. I will remind myself of my reasons for racing in an Ironman and I will say to myself “This is really living life to the fullest!”
Run	3H 35'	I will run each mile in the 8:10-8:30/mile range.	I will drink something from a cup at each aid station—Gatorade, Coke, or water.	I will set my mental focus on my running form. I will focus on the elements of my running form that I have practiced thoroughly especially relaxing my body and minimizing the ground contact time of my strides. I will listen for the soft “pitter patter” of my feet I always hear when I am running my best.
Post-Race	N.A.	N.A.	As soon as I feel comfortable doing so, I'll ingest my pre-mixed recovery drink. Then I'll sip Gatorade as I walk around, talk with family, get a gentle massage, and clean up. About two hours after the race, I'll eat a small meal of real foods and do so every two hours until I go to bed.	I will have fun and share the day with my family, the volunteers, and my fellow racers.

We hope that the ideas outlined here help you to create a Race Plan for your next triathlon. Have fun!

*Jason Gootman MS, CSCS and Will Kirousis BS, CSCS coach endurance athletes of all levels, write for conditioning related magazines/journals, and provide educational services for private and professional groups about optimizing endurance sports performance through their company Tri-Hard Sports Conditioning Systems. Jason and Will, USA Triathlon and USA Cycling Certified Coaches, can be reached with questions or comments through their website [www.tri-hard.com](http://www.tri-hard.com) or via email at [jason@tri-hard.com](mailto:jason@tri-hard.com) and [will@tri-hard.com](mailto:will@tri-hard.com) respectively.*

***The End!***