

TIPS FOR YOUR FIRST TRIATHLON

Before the race

Practise all three disciplines in the weeks leading up to the race. Vary the sessions to include some longer steady efforts and some harder intervals for all three disciplines.

Have a go at a few 'brick sessions'.....running straight after a bike ride.....keep the bike short but high pace, change shoes quickly and follow with a high tempo short run.....your legs will feel weird for the first ½ mile or so and it will seem slow!

Try to taper off in the last few days....do some training, but not as much so you are fresh for the race.

Try to suss out the course. If possible go & have a look, if not, look at maps etc so you know what to expect. Check the number of laps / hills etc!!

Try to sleep well two nights before the race...you'll probably be nervous & have to get up early on the night before, so won't get much sleep!

Keep hydrated the day before the race. Avoid alcohol / tea / coffee. Eat a decent carbohydrate rich meal the night before (pasta etc)....I tend to have a banana / cereal bar in the evening too.

Allow plenty of time in the morning. Eat a decent breakfast. Porridge is good, so are cereal bars, bananas etc try and drink before the race as well. Allow about an hour at the venue to register, rack your bike, go to the loo 20 times & get ready! I also try to sip an energy drink on the way to the race too.

For an open water swim, practise as often as you can in the wetsuit to get used to the cold, poor visibility, breathing in choppy conditions, navigation, getting the suit on & off quickly.

Try out some nutrition in training before the race so you know how your stomach reacts. Try different brands. I use 'high 5 gels' and 'high 5 energy source' in one bottle mixed up not too strong, water in my second bottle.

Practice / rehearse your transition routine so you go through in your head what you need to do in what order.

Products to buy.....talc, body glide for wetsuit swims, gels, elastic laces, number belt.

Also.....chop your fingernails short / take off rings so you don't knick your wetsuit.....they are fragile!!

Check your bike over and prepare your kit! Pack you race kit in a small rucksack / stacker box.



PRODUCTS THAT ARE USEFUL.

If you are going to use gels / energy drink, practise with them in training first...some people's stomachs don't like them. I use high 5 products!

Gels / energy source, talc, body glide (lubricant) KY Jelly also works...don't use Vaseline as it is not water based and harms the wetsuits!

Race day

Remember to enjoy the experience and try to stay relaxed!!

Wear your tri suit to the venue with warm, comfortable clothes over the top.

Register, get marked with your numbers, rack your bike, **remember to leave it in an easy gear!**, lay out your transition area, get your head round where you are racked, check out swim in, bike out, bike in, run out and finish points.....if your not sure ask. If you can walk through them in the order you'll do them. Mentally rehearse this when you walk through it!

About 10 – 15 mins before the start have a gel and a drink

Swim

Put your goggles on under the swim hat, so they have less chance of being knocked off!!

Don't go too hard. Pace yourself. Concentrate on a long relaxed stroke. For open water swims, start at the side / back. The mass start is a lottery, better to be out of the way so you can concentrate on your own rhythm. Remember to look up and navigate every 5 – 10 strokes! Once things settle down, try and find someone to draft behind...follow their toes!

Exiting the swim.....when still in the water, pull the front neck part of the wetsuit down to allow water to rush in...this makes it easier to get off.

Undo the zip at the back, take one arm out, followed by the other and let the suit hang round your waist.....try to do this while running to transition.

When you arrive at your bike, take the suit off.....pull down the legs below the knee, stand on the suit to pull feet out! Throw it to the back of your transition towel.

Transition 1

Lay out your towel **on the side you push the bike**. Rack the bike by the saddle so the bike is pointing forwards. Helmet with straps open, sunglasses and number belt are placed on bars, lay out your transition towel as per the photo.

Cover the towel with talc and put it in all shoes and socks you will use.

Put on kit in the following order: sunglasses, helmet, number belt (**number on back**). Socks, cycling shoes. Put gel in your trisuit pocket or alternatively tape it to the bike before the start of the race. ...run to bike out! Be careful not to slip...running in cleats is tricky!! **Make sure your helmet is on & fastened before you touch the bike or you will get a time penalty / DQ!**

Mount at the allocated point...you cannot ride in transition.



Layout kit on the **correct side** of the bike in a logical order as shown.

Bike

Spin legs to start, settle into your rhythm, but try not to push too big a gear. I try and use the computer to hold an average pace and flick between this and distance covered to gauge my effort. Remember not to draft other competitors...this will get you a time penalty / DQ. Remember to drink!! I have a gel towards the end of the bike leg. With about ½ mile to go try to spin your legs (use a lower gear), and I also try to have a calf stretch too (push heels down on pedals).

Dismount at the allocated point....run bike back to transition area. Rack the bike by the brake levers!! The other way round than before!!!

Transition 2

Make sure bike is racked before you undo your helmet...time penalty / DQ!!

Once bike is racked.....helmet off, bike shoes off, running shoes on (elastic laces will save you 20 – 30 seconds!!), I often leave sunglasses on, make your way to run out, while running **turn the number belt round** before the timing point.

Run

Pace yourself, don't go too hard too soon....your legs will feel weird, this will pass after about ½ mile!...remember those brick sessions!!

Take advantage of drinks stations.

If you feel ok with a mile or so to go, then perhaps pick up the pace.

After the race

Remember to eat, drink and stretch.

Congratulations you have finished your first race!!!!!!

TRIATHLON KIT LIST

SWIM

TRI SUIT
GOGGLES
WETSUIT / BAG / PLASTIC BAG
SWIM CAP
BODY GLIDE / LUBE

BIKE

PUMP
PACK CONTAINING: TUBE, LEVERS, MULTI TOOL
BOTTLES X2 (1 WATER, 1 ENERGY DRINK)
HELMET
SUNGLASSES
BIKE SHOES
NUMBER BELT
PINS
NUMBER
RACE SOCKS

TRANSITION STUFF

OLD TOWEL
TALC
RUCKSAC / BOX

RUN

RACE TRAINERS WITH ELASTIC LACES

EXTRA'S

TRACK PUMP
TOWEL
SHOWER GEL
CHANGE OF CLOTHES
KEYS
WALLET
PHONE
RACE INFO
LOO ROLL
RAGEX / MUSCLE RUB
WATCH / HRM
MAP BOOK

WET WEATHER CLOTHING

GILET
ARM WARMERS
CYCLE JACKET
CYCLING GLOVES
SKULL HAT
LEG WARMERS

FOOD

BANANAS
CEREAL BARS
SANDWICHES ETC?
GELS
ENERGY DRINK IN BOTTLE