



Formerly the Tri-to-Beat-Cancer Triathlon.

**SATURDAY 18TH JUNE 2011**

Belvedere House & Gardens, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

### **Welcome to the fighting Cancer training plan**

Below we detail suggestions for gear and training, we would recommend that you look for a local triathlon club as it's always easier to train with a group and there is a lot of experience and support there. Our club is **Midland Tri Club** which is very active and has plenty of organized training sessions going on all year round, check out [www.midlandtri.com](http://www.midlandtri.com).

The training plan below is set out for individuals but we would encourage anybody who feels that they are not yet ready to do all 3 disciplines take in a team. Do the run on the first year, or perhaps the swim and run, if you need a team mate, please contact us or put a note up on our face-book page.

#### **=== What's First? ===**

Before you actually begin training for a triathlon, there are a few things to do, and the first is to make sure you are healthy enough to actually do the training! Starting any sport or training regimen means that your body may be undergoing some things it is not used to doing. Be sure to have medical clearance before you begin a new workout program. Once you get started, be aware of the differences between training soreness and training pain; soreness might mean nothing is wrong or you just need to take it easy for a day, but pain could indicate an injury that needs attention before it makes you stop training. When in doubt, stop training and get medical help.

One common workout problem is hydration - or lack of it. You need to take in enough fluids to give your body the liquid it needs to function. While it is possible to over-drink, that does not happen very often in short events like sprint triathlons. Another common setback is muscle cramps. Recent research ideas indicate that cramps are not always from dehydration or low electrolyte levels; they are frequently fatigue induced. The muscles cramp because they have been asked to do more than they are used to doing for a prolonged period. The way to diminish the occurrence of cramps is to workout with gradually progressing durations, and to have some parts of those workouts at intensity levels higher than you would be doing during a race.

#### **=== Gear and Clothes ===**

What kind of equipment do you need to do a triathlon? A bike, a bike helmet and running shoes. There is more that you could have - things that will help you race better or safer.

**Swim:** You don't need any special gear, but goggles are a big plus. They protect your eyes and they help you swim in a straight line.

**Bike:** Besides a bike helmet and a safe, working bike (bolts tight, brakes working, tires not too old and properly inflated), other goodies that will help are sunglasses, a water bottle holder attached to the bike (called a cage). Shoes are a must, too (a lot of Triathletes will wear the same shoes on the bike and the run). A key bike element is regular maintenance: checking tires, checking brakes, and lubricating the chain (note - use a bike chain lubricant, not WD-4. WD-40 will make your chain wear faster, it attracts dirt).

**Run:** You need shoes for the run! Socks are optional, but don't do a race sockless if you have never run that way before, doing so can lead to blisters. To prevent a blister, you could lubricate your shoe with Vaseline-type products around areas that feel "hot" from trial/training runs done sockless. Another run help is a hat to protect your head and shield you from the sun. And wear those sunglasses from the bike, too.

**Clothes:** You should wear the same clothes for each leg of a triathlon. Pick something that is not baggy and dries fast; in a short race, just a swimsuit (female) or a swimsuit and a shirt (male) may be enough.

### === Arranging Workouts ===

Runners run, Cyclists cycle, and Swimmers swim. Triathletes do all three! Your first triathlon may seem overwhelming, but if you look at training in little chunks it may be less daunting. Set a weekly goal of doing two to three workouts in each mode: three swims, three runs, and three bike rides. Be consistent and it will become a habit that leads to better health and fitness.

Nine workouts in one week? Yes and no. You can swim and bike or run on the same day. A few weeks into training you should do a combined a bike and run workout (called a brick) every week or two (note - by doing bricks, you are training specifically for a triathlon. This can help your body and mind get used to changing gears during the race). You should take one day off each week to give your body time to adapt to training, and you should incorporate what you already do into your training, like regular PT runs.

How could you arrange your week of workouts? One example:

- Mon: Bike
- Tue: Morning Run, Lunchtime Swim
- Wed: Bike
- Thu: Morning Run, Lunchtime Swim
- Fri: Run in the morning
- Sat: Bike, start and finish at the pool, Swim afterward
- Sun: Off

How long should you train each week? For sprint-distance events, Start at 25% to 100% of the race distance, build to 2-3x that distance over the weeks of training. For this plan, do about the same amount/distance of work for each workout.

#### **TOTAL WEEKLY DISTANCE AT HIGHEST LEVEL:**

**Swim** = 175m-400m race = 500m-1200m/week (you could increase the swim to 4-5x race distance, but keep it short for your first training plan)

**Bike** = 10-15k race = 30-45k or 18-28 miles/week

**Run** = 5k race = 15k or 9 miles/week

### === What Training Do I Do? ===

What kind of training can you do for each part of a triathlon - swim, bike, run, and the transitions (that's the parts between the swim/bike and the bike/run)? For someone just starting triathlons, the first step is to do swims, bike rides, and runs, gradually building up to and even beyond the race distance (for shorter races). Beyond that, what else can you do? Mix up the workouts you do. Below are some ideas.

**Swim:** You may only be able to swim a half a length of a 25 meter pool at the moment, but with some instructed pool sessions you will be up to doing 750 meters in no time. Do some steady, long swims, working up to non-stop swims of the full race distance or longer. Hold back a bit at the start of the swim and do the entire swim at the same pace or get slightly faster towards the end. Do a series of shorter swims with short rest, working up to the series of swims equaling the race distance or longer. Take just enough rest to allow you to maintain the same effort level for all of the swims. A third type is short swims with rest equal to or up to double the amount of time it took for the swim. You do these almost as fast as you can, trying to average the fastest possible speed for all of the swims. TIP: Another way to measure rest besides time is to count your breaths, giving yourself a fixed number of breaths between each swim.

**Bike:** Like swim training, you can do similar things on the bike by alternating easy and fast efforts. You could do a longer, steady bike ride, do some shorter faster efforts within a longer bike ride, or even go on a ride and try to ride up every hill you can find. Hills may seem like a crazy idea, but they are a great way

to build strength, start each hill in a moderate to easy gear and keep your pedals spinning, moving into easier gears if your pedals start to slow.

**Run:** Just like swimming and cycling, you can do similar workouts. Another idea is to work up to full race distance by doing steady, increasing distance runs with pre-planned walk breaks if needed (for example, from the beginning of the workout, run 3 minutes, walk 1 minute). You can also do shorter, faster intervals within a longer session. Hills are great for run strength, too; aim to keep a steady pace all the way up the hill - if you cannot, then you went too fast at the start of the climb. TIP: Learn to look forward to hills and running in Okinawa will get much easier!

**Transition:** How fast you can change your mode of movement will probably not make the difference in your first triathlon, but being ready for those changes will make it easier and more fun. Practice putting on and taking off each piece of gear in the same order of the way you will do it at the race. It never ceases to amaze me the difference in times in transition; swimmers kill themselves and then spend 5 minutes changing into a full cycling gear, check out transitions on you-tube. Do some transition practices as dedicated sessions, and do some as part of a combined two-mode session (swim-bike, bike-run, run-bike, or bike-swim) or even three-mode session.

**TIP:** As you near the end of a swim, bike, or run, do a quick mental check of what you will be doing in transition to change modes.

*Enjoy your training, looking forward to seeing you on the 18th of June*

*The Fighting Cancer Triathlon team!*