

recommend taking a few lessons so you have something in your head to work on. One simple drill that helps all swimmers is swimming every other length with your fists closed. This makes you to swim with high elbows under water and to grab the water with your whole arm, not just your hands.

The last serious pit-fall for most triathletes is over-training. When an athlete comes up to me and says "I think I might be overtraining", we'll...I know that they are. In the September, 2002 issue of Northwest Runner, Dr. John Robertson listed some of the signs of overtraining as "loss of appetite or body weight, insomnia, unusual joint or muscle aching, frequent infections, irritability, depression, or simply poor performance and a lack of desire". The most objective measure of overtraining is a higher than normal increase in your heart rate at the beginning of a workout. If you think you might be overtraining cut back for a specific amount of time and to a specific level. Set a goal and stay focused on it. After a brief recovery period, (usually a week of lower than "normal" training) slowly start ramping up again. Don't leave yourself open-ended rests lest they become the norm. Remember too that overtraining is just as likely to be caused by insufficient rest or poor nutrition so cutting back on training and continuing to drink three Diet Pepsis a day is just plain dumb.

Conclusion: Becoming a triathlete is not about buying expensive gear, or mastering all the Iron-man jargon. Becoming a triathlete means you are determined to learn new skills, learn how to train efficiently, and stay focused on how your body is reacting to stress. If you train smart, keep a log, and take care of your diet, you can make improvements in all three sports. One of my athletes,

Jessica, was an experienced runner with no experience swimming and cycling. She didn't have a lot of time to train but she worked hard on her skills and did a respectable 2:51:52 in her first Olympic distance event.

From my coaching experience, I don't think you will be successful if you just train out of habit like some runners do. There are no "garbage miles" in a triathlete's schedule. Every workout should be approached with a specific goal in mind, no matter how simple. With a little time and a supportive group of people around you, the finish line of some impossibly tough triathlon will soon be just ahead of you.

### General Terms for Triathletes

**Aerobars:** Bars that extend forward from the stem of your bike, includes elbow rests, for keeping your body low and narrow to reduce air resistance.

**Bricks:** Usually a bike workout followed immediately by a run, but also can mean any combination of two sports in one continuous workout.

**Cadence:** Refers to bicycle pedaling rate and is measured in Rotations per Minute (RPM's). A Cadence of 80 RPM's means each pedal makes 80 full revolutions in 60 seconds.

**Circuit training:** Selected exercises performed in a specific sequence with little rest between them.

**Core Training:** Resistance training focusing on your upper and lower abdomen and obliques (sides) but can also include your back, chest, butt, thighs, and hamstrings.

**Cyclometer:** A small computer mounted on your handlebar that displays your speed, distance, and time traveled. May also display cadence.

**Drafting:** Riding directly behind another rider thus reducing air resistance,

(makes riding up to 20% easier).

**Intervals:** A workout with repeated efforts of a fixed distance or time with brief rest periods between.

**Lace locks:** Little plastic do-hickeys that hold your laces tight without having to tie them.

**Lengths and Laps (swimming):** A length is from one end of the pool to the other. A lap is down and back. To avoid confusion swimmers use yardage to measure distance swum. 50 yards is two lengths. 100 yards is 4 lengths. One mile is 71 lengths in a normal pool.

**Ironman and Half Iron:** Ironman races include 2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike, and 26.2 mile run. Half Iron: 1.2, 56, 13.1.

**Olympic distance:** 1500 meter swim, 40 kilometer bike, 10 k run.

**Sprint distance:** Half of Olympic distance.

**T1:** First transition from swim to bike. Can be a verb, i.e. the act of transitioning, or a noun, the roped off area where bikes are stored.

**T2:** Is the second transition; from bike to run, often located in the same place as T1.

**Time Trial:** A long sustained solo effort, usually on the bike.

**Tri-bike, Road bike:** A tri bike is a road bike except for a few modifications to cut down on air resistance, including deep v-shaped rims on the wheels, tear-drop shaped tubes on frame, forks, and seat post, aero bars, and sometimes a seat position three or four inches forward compared to a normal road bike.

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