

## **Complete this easy to do 8-week Triathlon Training program, and you'll be sure to finish your first triathlon.**

Summer is almost upon us and you're itching to do that sprint triathlon down at Midmar Dam come middle of October. You want to finish it don't you? Good! Follow this easy to use 8-week program and you will easily cruise through a 600m swim, 20km bike and 5km run.

The program is divided into the following sections:

### **Weeks 0 to 2**

This will allow you to get a feel for the way a triathlete should train. It will help you build up some strength, allow you to lose the stiffness in the muscles and identify your strengths and weaknesses. Basically, you should know exactly where you stand after the first two easy weeks.

### **Weeks 2 to 4**

Here we shall keep the program structure the same, but up the mileage by some 20%. It means you go a bit harder which will allow you to build up a good base from which to work. It is important that we do not overdo it, as injuries and lack of energy are two issues we want to avoid.

### **Weeks 4 to 6**

These will be the two peak weeks and are the most important. Consistency is the name of the game. You have to keep your sessions regular and not skip any training. Obviously illness, injury or exhaustion can be taken into account, but if possible, stick to the program as best you can. You can play around with some of the sessions, so mix and match where necessary. As long as you do the necessary weekly sessions - swimming, cycling and running.

### **Week 7**

This week will be used specifically for speed work. Everything is short and sharp. The countdown has begun.

### **Week 8**

This is basically rest, rest and more rest. You do not become fitter in the week preceding the event. If anything, you can do your chances of having a good race some serious damage by overdoing it. Relax and enjoy the rest. Wait for the big day and give it everything you have got. For most, it is just a question of finishing, so take up the challenge and enjoy the race and the atmosphere. It could be the start of a very long triathlon career.

## **HELPFUL HINTS AND TIPS**

Before we start, make sure you're in possession of the right equipment. The basics include a swimming costume, swim cap and goggles. Please note that it is compulsory to wear a swim cap during the swim leg of a triathlon, so make sure you buy one. Most indoor pools require that you use them, so most should already have this basic item. Goggles are also important. If you wear specs or contact lenses, then they are an absolute must. One must admit that you are certainly not going to see any marine life under water, so the goggles are there more for comfort and eye protection.

You will have noticed the use of wetsuits at all the races. The original thought was to use this suit to keep you warm in the cold water. However things have changed and manufacturers now design suits to make you fast. These are however quite costly, so if you're on a budget, rather opt for the speedo. Unless the water is really cold, do not wear the old faithful skin diving suit. This will only weigh you down and hinder your swim stroke. There are only two real options here. Either buy the expensive triathlon wetsuit or go with the stock standard swimming costume.

As for the bike, once again, you have a choice between expensive and "good enough". As a novice, I would recommend that you keep faith in whatever bike you have presently, be it a jalopy or a mountain bike. As long as it has two wheels and is roadworthy, it's certainly good enough for your first triathlon. Once you have passed the beginners stage and wish to go faster, then one can look at getting something slightly lighter and more efficient. I would not spend too much money until you are completely sure that this is the sport for you. Most novices will ride in their running shoes, which is not a bad thing. If you want to look the part, then buy yourself a decent pair of cycle shoes and pedals. These two items will definitely make you go faster. A helmet is also compulsory, so don't go to the race without it!!

Running shoes are also an essential item to add to the list. Don't go and run in new shoes on the day of the race. Wear in the shoes first. The run is hard enough without having to worry about blisters.

## **RACE DAY HINTS**

In the transition area, make sure you know exactly where your bike is. It may sound stupid but when you have a thousand bikes all lined up together and you're not totally sure where you put yours before you started swimming, you can end up losing significant amounts of time looking for the trusty steed. The swim start is also vital. Don't go to the front unless you can swim with the big boys. Rather start at the back or on the sides where you have a good amount of freedom to swim at your own pace. It is also a good idea to continually look up during your swim to make sure you're headed in the right direction.

Before you start the bike, take your time and ensure that you have what you need to complete the bike ride. A spare tube and pump in case of puncturing. You do not want to train for weeks only to find that you puncture and cannot repair! Start the bike easy and build up speed. If you're a slow swimmer, do not try and make up all the time lost within the first couple of kilometers on the bike. Pacing yourself is of the utmost importance.

The run should also be approached with a certain amount of caution. Start slow and finish like the wind.

If it's hot, please drink adequately during the cycle and the run. Performance does take a dip if you're dehydrated, so just keep that in mind during the race.

A final pointer is to look and learn. There is nothing better than learning from those in the know.

## TESTER SESSIONS

Our first three sessions will begin on a Friday. The idea here is quite simply to show you what your limitations are and to gauge your start up fitness levels

### Friday

Put on your watch and run for a total of 20 minutes at a good comfortable pace. See what distance you can cover in the time limit allowed. Don't go hard, easy is what you want.

### Saturday

Go down to your nearest pool and attempt to swim non-stop for 5 minutes. It may sound short, but if you are not a swimmer, it could feel like an eternity. Rest if you have to, but once again measure the distance you complete within the 5-minute limit.

### Sunday

Take out your bike and see what distance you can cover in 60 minutes. Once again, take it easy and do not over exert.

You might be slightly stiff and somewhat tired, especially if you're a complete couch potato. Nonetheless, at least you now know where you stand in terms of limitations and fitness levels. Now the real work starts as you begin the 8-week cycle.

## MONDAYS:

This is a day of rest throughout the 8 weeks, a perfect day to relax and enjoy. Perfect to sort out those post weekend blues.

## CYCLE 1 (Weeks 1 – 2)

	Swim	Bike	Run
<b>Tuesday</b>	8 x 25m easy swim Rest 30 secs between each 25m 100m easy swim 4 x 25m hard, rest after each	Rest	4km easy jog
<b>Wednesday</b>	Rest	20 – 60km easy	Rest
<b>Thursday</b>	4 x 100m straight swim Rest 30 secs after each 100m		4km easy
<b>Friday</b>	Rest	20 – 40km easy	4km hard Effort Take Time!
<b>Saturday</b>	8 x 50m swim	15km easy	4km easy
<b>Sunday</b>	2 x 200m straight swim Rest 1min after each 200m	60km easy	Rest

	<b>Swim</b>	<b>Bike</b>	<b>Run</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	400m straight swim	20km moderate	4km moderate
<b>Wednesday</b>	16 x 25m swim Rest 30 Sec after each.	Rest	Rest
<b>Thursday</b>	Rest	40 – 60km moderate	Rest
<b>Friday</b>	4 x 100m swim Rest 1min after each	Rest	4km time trail record time!
<b>Saturday</b>	8 x 50m swim One easy, one hard Rest 30 secs after each	Rest	4km easy
<b>Sunday</b>	Rest	80km moderate	4km directly After the bike

## CYCLE 2

	<b>Swim</b>	<b>Bike</b>	<b>Run</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	4 x 200m straight Swim, Rest 1min after each	Rest	8km easy
<b>Wednesday</b>	Rest	Rest	6km of hills
<b>Thursday</b>	8 x 100m swim Rest 30 secs after each one	40 – 60km moderate	Rest
<b>Friday</b>	16 x 50m swim Rest 15 secs after each	Rest	4km hard time trail record time!
<b>Saturday</b>	32 x 25m Swim Rest 10 secs after each one Rest 1 min after each 4	20km ride after swim	Rest
<b>Sunday</b>	Rest	80km ride at good pace	2km after bike ride

	<b>Swim</b>	<b>Bike</b>	<b>Run</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	800m straight swim	20km easy	7 km easy
<b>Wednesday</b>	2 X 400m swim Rest 2 min after each 400m	Rest	7km moderate
<b>Thursday</b>	Rest	20km Moderate	Rest
<b>Friday</b>	4 x 200m swim One hard, one easy Rest 1min after each	Rest	4km hard time trail record time!
<b>Saturday</b>	800m straight swim Take time!	Rest	Rest
<b>Sunday</b>	Rest	40km TT hard effort Take Time	2km after bike ride Run easy

### CYCLE 3 (WEEKS 4 – 6)

This is your most important training period. Stay healthy, eat well and rest. You need these next two weeks to give you that peak needed for the event. If you do get injured or sick, take time off. Don't try and play catch up by stacking your days with increased mileage.

	<b>Swim</b>	<b>Bike</b>	<b>Run</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	1000m straight swim	Rest	8km easy
<b>Wednesday</b>	Rest	40km hard	5km moderate
<b>Thursday</b>	10 x 100m on 2:30 secs	40km moderate	Rest
<b>Friday</b>	5 x 200m, One easy, One hard, One easy, One hard, last easy Rest 1 min after each	Rest	4km hard time trail record time!
<b>Saturday</b>	20 x 50m, rest Rest 10 secs after each Rest 1 minute after set of 5	20km moderate	Rest
<b>Sunday</b>	Rest	90km hard ride	5km run directly after

	<b>Swim</b>	<b>Bike</b>	<b>Run</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	2 x 500m swim Rest 2min after each	Rest	5km easy
<b>Wednesday</b>	Rest	40km hard	8km moderate
<b>Thursday</b>	10 x 100m on 2:30 Rest 1min after 5	Rest	Rest
<b>Friday</b>	20 x 50m on 1:30 Rest 1min after 4	Rest	4km hard time trail record time!
<b>Saturday</b>	40 x 25m swim 4 hard then 4 easy, do 5 sets	20km moderate	Rest
<b>Sunday</b>	Rest	80km hard ride	5km run directly after

#### CYCLE 4

The hard training is over, we now just have to sharpen up and have some good rest. The important thing about to learn about speed is this; go all out, but rest in between. Your sleep is also important during this period.

	<b>Swim</b>	<b>Bike</b>	<b>Run</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	200m easy 4 x 50 hard efforts Rest 30 secs after each 200m easy 8 x 25m swim hard, rest 30 sec After each on 200m easy swim	Rest	8km fartlek run Jog 400m Sprint 100m for the 8km
<b>Wednesday</b>	Rest	20km, Easy ride for 4km hard ride for 1km. do it 4 times	Rest
<b>Thursday</b>	500m swim as hard as possible	Rest	4km easy
<b>Friday</b>	Rest	10km time trail as hard as possible	Rest
<b>Saturday</b>	5 x 100m Sprints After each 100m rest 1min	Rest	4km time trail
<b>Sunday</b>	Rest	20km time trail as hard as possible	4km easy run

## LAST WEEK (RACE WEEK)

The most important thing here is rest, rest, rest. You are not going to get any faster or fitter in this last week. Enjoy it while it lasts.

<b>Tuesday</b>	Run 8km nice and easy
<b>Wednesday</b>	Ride for 20km also nice and easy
<b>Thursday</b>	Swim 500m at leisurely pace
<b>Friday</b>	Rest
<b>Saturday</b>	Rest
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>RACE DAY (ALL OUT!!!)</b>