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TRAIN THE MIND TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

This is not a trite "mind over body" type article. The importance of learning how to train and compete mentally as well as physically can make the difference in any sport, particularly triathlon. As triathletes, we tackle an infinite number of issues that could pose as barriers. They range from guilt of not being able to train enough due to other commitments, to panicking on the race course due to a flat tire or other disruption to your game plan. So, here are some tips on how to improve your mental game and therefore, your triathlon performance.

Mental Preparation

Numerous studies have shown that creating a mental vision of yourself competing can have a direct impact on your performance. Some see themselves as others would and some see themselves from the inside out. Regardless of the type of vision, a vision has a very positive impact. See yourself smoothly coming out of the water, easily sliding off your wetsuit, changing for the bike flawlessly and riding away uninterrupted.

Vivid mental imagery is another great tool to improve your mental game. As a RD assigned to the Transition Area, I get to watch triathletes take off their wetsuit, ride into the dismount area on one pedal and transfer from the bike to the run. Watching someone perform tasks in perfect form (yes, I've seen plenty of not so perfect too), will create a stored image that can be recalled when you're performing it. Imagery also actually creates neural tracks in the central nervous system that are later recalled and transmitted to muscles to instruct them how to respond. Imagery also can create that "feel good" response to the moment that increases your sense of accomplishment and accompanying motivation.

Competitive Pressures

Ever get intimidated when looking around the Transition Area and seeing other triathletes that you *perceive* to be "at a whole other level?" Have you felt like pre-race butterflies were trying to fly out of your mouth? These reactions can have a more profound effect on some than others. Consider taking a few deep breaths to increase the oxygen flow to the body and to calm and relax you. Move around or jog a bit. Also, realize that being around more experienced triathletes can help you learn more. The more educated you are, the more confident you are and the better the triathlete you'll be.

Speed Bumps

Mental preparation can sometimes even rival physical preparation in

[And The Endurance Athlete](#)

[Triathlete Spotlight](#)

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TABOO TOPICS FOR TRIATHLETES

If I spend enough time training in a pool, do I really have to practice in open water?

Good question. It pretty much depends on your risk tolerance and ability to adapt under pressure. You will experience anxiety in the swim portion of a tri since it will feel so new to you- no swim lanes, no "other end" to sight to, no way to stand up, tons of people around you, no clock to judge your pace and the nerves associated with racing. If you can handle these pressures and variables well- no need to swim in open water. The average triathlete handles pressure well but there is no substitute for preparedness and saving your energy for the rest of the race.

In fact, watch for our swim clinics in open water to be

importance. The real world of multisport racing often brings surprises. Here are some bumps and what to do to make sure you don't view them as mountains:

Pain & Fatigue - please do not ponder whether you've trained enough during the actual race. Focus on the task at hand. Very few people do not feel the effect of fatigue during a race. Break down the race into segments and the segments into chunks. Tackle them one chunk at a time if need be. Chunks too big? Break them down further. During the last 2-miles of my 1st Olympic distance race, I was directing my energies towards every mile marker. I also stayed focused by counting alternate foot strikes until I reached 100. Then, I started over again; then I did the alphabet, etc.

Disrupted Game Plan - numerous factors can throw your plan out the window, e.g. started the swim too fast and had to tread for a few seconds (several times), swam too close to a maniac who kept hitting me with their hand, got a dreaded flat tire, a calf cramp brought me to a screeching halt during the run, etc. It's not the disrupter that counts but how you handle it that matters. Take a few breaths, focus on the issue, take it in stride and keep moving toward the finish line. When disruptions occur while training, treat them as if they occurred during a race. This practice will improve preparation and build confidence and mental conditioning.

External Factors - issues out of your control - the water temperature, the seemingly endless hill, etc. Everyone is competing under the same conditions. Most of these circumstances are what make multisport racing so interesting. Try and make them part of the race challenge and not a problem that disrupts your performance.

Here are some additional tips on how to raise your mental game:

Developing Your Mental Game

- *Know/experience the course* - the average car ride over a Sprint distance course takes about 20-minutes and removes the avoidable fear of the unknown.
- *Utilize a race strategy* - cover nutrition, pacing and hydration and review it regularly.
- *Develop a mantra* - express it to renew your commitment as needed during the race.
- *Posture influences mind* - stand proud, walk tall, look people in the eye, hold your head up and be confident. Even if you're not, it's amazing how the right attitude can carry over to the right performance.
- *Get your rest* - visualize the race while you're off your feet, increasing your readiness.
- *Race in the present* - not the past since it no longer matters; focus on the present.
- *Go to the anchor* - we used the Otto's Farm example in a prior newsletter - at the first sign of a wane in confidence, recall your

announced soon for 2009. They sold out in 2-days in 2008, so we've expanded them for this year.

anchor or successful experience you had in training or racing. Then replay the success

- *Have fun* - it's easy to forget to have fun the more competitive you become but it's always a key element of making multisport part of your lifestyle.

GET ON THAT BIKE TRAINER!

MAX'S 2009 RACE REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

**New England
Season Opener
Du/Tri
May 10**

**Massachusetts State
Tri
July 26**

**Sharon's Back Tri
August 16**

**Title 9 Women's
Only Tri
September 13**

**Buzzard's Bay Tri
September 20**

Can't wait to see you
in 2009!

[Click Here to
register!](#)

We espoused the benefits of using a bike trainer at home in last month's newsletter, particularly from January through April. Many of you agree and asked us to help further by providing exercise sets to go along with their new toy and winter conditioning program. So, this is the beginning of a monthly column on bike trainer use and corresponding sets.

First, what are you going to accomplish with the use of the bike trainer (BT) and what type of exercise set helps you get there? All BT sets helps increase conditioning, build muscular strength and improve pedaling efficiency. But some sets are aimed at more specific gains, as follows:

- **Pushing moderate to heavy gears/resistance** - builds and maintains hip and glute strength
- **Spin-ups and high RPMs** - improves turnover
- **Isolated leg drills** - enhances pedaling efficiency & mechanics

How many sets should I do? How long should each BT workout last? Like most workouts, that depends on our goals (e.g. finish a race comfortably vs. top 3), your fitness level (e.g. getting in shape vs. taking it to the next level) and where you are in your training program (e.g. base period vs. race around the corner). So, use these sets in conjunction with other sets provided in previous Max Newsletters to build your own workout. Mix it up with both normal and hard sets, along with 2-3 minute rest intervals between each set. Always warm-up and cool-down.

Normal Set

1:00	39x15	Standing easy climb	RPE 12	HR Zone- 1	RPMs- 70s
1:00	39x17	Seated spinning	12	1	80s
1:00	39x14	Standing easy climb	12	1	70s
1:00	53x19	Seated spinning	13	2	80s
1:00	53x17	Standing easy climb	13	2	70s

Hard Set

2:00	53x13	Seated power climb	14	2-3	60-70
:30	53x15	Standing recovery	10	1-2	Easy
Repeat above 4x					

See Tri-jargon for abbreviation explanations.

Future Max Newsletters will simply be describing other Normal and Hard sets, along with sundry comments or answers to BT FAQs.

FAVORITE WORKOUT: ABS

The infomercials discussing the pitfalls to 'old fashioned crunches' are largely accurate in our book. So, here are three

variations to a valuable abs/core workout called "Planks." All benefit your core muscle group which supports you during the tougher times of a triathlon.

1. Plank- get into the push-up position and then rest on your forearms instead of your hands. Hold this position, maintaining good form. Build yourself up to being able to hold it for 2-min for some nice bragging rights. Increase difficulty by doing it using a Stability Ball instead of the floor.

2. Plank To the Ceiling- assume the plank position but bring your arms together to have your hands touch in a V-shape for support. After holding it for 5-10 seconds, raise your butt towards the ceiling and hold it there for 5-8 seconds. Repeat until you've reached your desired total exercise time. Increase difficulty by holding it longer in the plank and ceiling positions.

3. Plank With Foot Raises- assume the plank position and then raise one of your feet off the ground. Either hold it there, or alternate raising it up and down without resting on the floor. Alternate feet.

THINKING ABOUT HIRING A TRICOACH? TRICOACH FAQs

Written By Brandi Dion, B&S Fitness Programs, USAT L1, NSCA-CPT Part II of II

Last month we introduced some solid reasons behind hiring a tricoach. This short column addresses some of the more common questions considered before hiring a tricoach.

How long is the average coaching contract?

The average is 3+ Months (basically as long or as short a time period as you would like). This timeframe usually matches the time needed to accomplish your training goals.

What would say the most valuable need of a triathlete with less than 3-yrs experience?

That depends on the triathletes goals. If they have never been coached- I recommend it since it could bring them to a level they never thought possible. The structure and efficiency afforded by a tricoach is particularly instrumental in helping balance all of life's activities. Time is valuable so spending it wisely under the guidance of a coach is much more productive then learning it as you go.

For triathletes who want to get to a competitive level? Tricoaches help ensure commitment, consistency and focus. And we have a broad perspective to apply your abilities, goals and commitment to.

How does virtual coaching work?

Virtual training plans are personalized training programs created on line by a certified coach. To begin, I'll analyze information collected from your personalized questionnaire and a phone consultation. Then I design your "unique" training plan based on your experience level, race schedule, and your short and long-term goals. My goal is to gradually build your fitness to peak for your "A" race at a level of training you can complete with good energy, injury free. Training plans are prepared on a weekly/bi-weekly basis, and posted on line at your own unique URL. I encourage athlete feedback and questions about specific workouts, racing, race planning, technique, equipment, nutrition, and any other related issues via email or phone. Being consistent with any training regime is crucial to its success, therefore we recommend a minimum of three-months, but you can also get a one month plan.

Can I get out of an on-line contract if I don't like it or get injured and can not compete?

Any good coach will understand your situation and even ask you every couple months if you are enjoying the coaching and services offered. If you are not happy, you have the right to ask to finish up with the current month and I bet most will not make a big deal about breaking the contract. It all comes down to good business ethics and making your clients happy. I know I wouldn't want to force someone to finish out a contract if they were injured or unhappy with our services.

Does on-line coaching mean I have to spend every night logging in my workouts?

Every triathlete is different and has different goals. For someone looking to reach a certain goal or level, I do recommend logging in workouts. That doesn't have to be every night, it could be the end of the week or every couple days. Or you don't have to log in anything, you just have to follow your plan and call it a day. What it comes down to is commitment. Logging in the workout info is only going to help you and your coach

"NOW THAT'S A TRIATHLETE!"

"I signed up for my 1st tri for this Sept. and I'm extremely psyched. I was wondering though, how many bricks should I be doing in January?"

*-Eager Beaver
Beginner*

TRI LINGO

Cycling Jargon

RPE- Rate of Perceived Exertion- How tired you feel on a scale of 1-20.

HR Zone- Usually a 5 zone system is used to describe how hard you're working relative to your limits. It is calculated with the help of a trained coach or bike shop or by simply buying a HR monitor and using very general guidelines provided.

Chain Rings- Usually only 2 rings are referred. The first number represents the front ring (as you're seated on the bike) and the second number represents the back ring. The number specifically pertain to the cog you're on which varies based on the number of gears you have. So, 53x12= big chain ring

communicate and know what is going on. If you perform poorly in a race you can look back at your training and get an idea of what went wrong. There are also graphs. This way you can see if your planning is "periodized" correctly with the proper amount of swimming, biking, running and recovery. It's a great tool that provides a lot of information to you and your coach, but it is not mandatory by any means.

If you're considering a tri-coach, take advantage of the B&S Fitness Promo offered in the bottom of this newsletter!

BEGINNERS CORNER: TRIATHLON ETIQUETTE- ARE YOU BREAKING THE RULES?

If it's your first year in triathlon or your 20th, you know that an athlete's competitive spirit can prevail on race day. From the start of the swim, to the transition area, or out on the course; there are many places during a triathlon where folks should stop to ask themselves: Is this ok?

We've compiled a list of general rules that can help newbies along the path or even resolve that post race BBQ debate! Let us know if you have some you'd like to add and we'll publish them.

- **Transition area setup:** You think you've arrived early enough, but your entire row is filled...or at least it appears that way with John Powerbar setting up a refugee camp. Common decency says, setup your bike in the designated area with no more space than a gym towel next to your bike. Best solution is to arrive early, but if you arrive late....offer bribes such as energy drinks and politely ask athletes to scoot over :o)
- **Swim Start:** You will get knocked around. Let's face it, with anywhere from 50-100 bodies starting on spin cycle, you are bound to get kicked, slapped, or hit with an appendage. It's no one's fault, so don't be "that guy" who blames a bad swim time on getting hit in the face. It happens to us all....
- **Sharing????:** A bike pump- perfectly acceptable. BodyGlide- only for the strong at heart!
- **Incoming!!!:** Ever get railroaded from behind at the dismount line? Ouch...if your legs weren't already smokin' from the bike course, now you're contending with a heel injury. Rule: Make sure you allow enough room to slow down before the dismount line. Elite athletes make up 1% of the field; let's leave the fancy John Wayne landings to them.
- **Be Respectful to Volunteers:** They come out to help at races and only receive a free T-shirt and a few munchies. Yet, on occasion, they'll receive verbal bashings from spandex wearing, shaved legged, 'take them for granted' racers. Volunteers help make the race happen and it's quite rude to do anything but thank them for their help. If you must, ask questions politely and if you have a gripe please find a Max RD after the race.
- **Stay to the Right:** On the bike and the run, stay to the right except to pass an athlete. Give a friendly "On your left" prior to

on the front and the smallest ring on the back- the hardest gear your bike has. A 39x15= small ring on the front and a ring roughly in the middle on the back.

RPMs- Revolutions Per Minute as measured by your bike computer.

GREAT TRAINING SONGS

What makes them great? They either psych you up or simply make you feel good! *[Please don't wear headphones when you ride outside though!]*

- "Miss Independent" by Ne-Yo
- "Superman" by REM
- "Get This Party Started" by Pink
- "Why Do You Love Me" by Garbage
- "Sharp Dressed Man" by ZZ Top
- "Blister In the Sun" by Violent Fems
- "That's Not My Name" by The Ting Tings
- "Talk Dirty to Me" by Poison

passing an athlete. It's also nice to offer encouragement to your fellow athletes with praise and well wishes.

- **Karma:** action or doing, the cause and effect...coming full circle...

NUTRITION NEWS: GLUTEN- A DIGESTIVE MESS? GLUTEN FREE AND THE ENDURANCE ATHLETE

If you've visited your local supermarket's Natural or Organic department, you've probably come across foods that are labeled "Gluten Free." Gluten Free diets are intended for individuals with Celiac's Disease or digestive tract problems. Gluten is a type of protein often found in wheat, barley, and rye. When ingested, it can cause irritation to the small intestine, block absorption of essential nutrients and bind the stomach of affected people. The list is long, but foods that typically contain gluten are breads, cereals, crackers, pasta, cookies, soups, beer, candy, salad dressings, just to name a few.

How does this affect endurance athletes?

Many endurance athletes who are not affected by Celiac's disease are discovering that Gluten affects their digestion of pre-race meals and are now taking steps to avoid gluten. Athletes will need to find foods labeled "Gluten-Free" in the supermarket or consider the following: fresh meats, fish, poultry, fruits & veggies, rice, potatoes, most dairy products, wine and distilled liquors. In addition, many companies are producing meal replacement bars, protein bars and energy bars that are Gluten Free.

Another grain becoming popular is **Quinoa**; pronounced "KEEN-wah." It's a hearty and complete grain originating in South America that's gluten free. Quinoa has an amazing nutritional makeup that many endurance athletes will find attractive with carbohydrates and a balanced set of amino acids. Oh yeah, it typically provides **10-14g of protein** per serving! Plus, its gluten free, which many athletes have found easier to digest than wheat or flour based products.

Bottom Line: If you're constantly struggling with digestive problems before or during your race, consider some of the alternatives described above. It's best to trial new foods during your training runs or rides to see how you are affected. As always, consult your physician for advice on digestive and nutritional counseling.

TRIATHLETE SPOTLIGHT

SUPPORTING CHARITIES

We hand picked a few to support their causes and allow participants to do the same. Hope you do!

Rosie's Place

Prostate Cancer Foundation

Local YMCAs

Team Hole in the Wall

Souls 4 Soles

MAX PRAISE

"Once again I am amazed at how great the races are that Max Performance puts on! No detail was missed as far as I was concerned. The atmosphere was just plain fun, which doesn't always happen post race, but it was a joy to sit and wait for the results. Just the fact that kids and dogs are welcome is huge!"

-Tara W.

Vicki Arel

Profile - I am a Sales & Service Manager for Citizens Bank's 500+ In-Store branches in 13 states. More importantly, I am the proud mother of four grown children, a daughter-in-law and a soon to be daughter-in-law. Our two dogs are our kids now. I have a good life and love to have a good time!

The "beginning" - In 1995 my sister called me at work and asked me if I wanted to do a triathlon with her. Without even knowing what a triathlon is I said yes. That day, I did on-line registration and ordered a book on-line. Until the Title 9 Tri, that was the only one I had done.

Athletic Interests - I have always been an athlete at heart. I tried out for any sport that I could in high school to no avail. (I was a bit awkward). Finally in my junior year, as a result of the actual Title 9, our school had to add a girl's cross-country team. They were looking for girls to sign up and that was my call to action. This began a lifelong love of running for me. I also love the game of hockey. I have been an assistant coach on my daughters team and played with a group of "over 40" women called "Chicks with Sticks". During my triathlon training I picked up a love of swimming.

Triathlon Accomplishments - I did my first triathlon in 1995 and met my personal goal to finish! Max's Title 9 was my second ever triathlon. As much as I love to swim, open water swimming is a mental challenge for me. Following the Title 9 Tri I committed to do three triathlons in 2009 in celebration of my 50th birthday in December of 2008.

Motivation - It is exhilarating to cross the finish line! There is nothing else like it. It keeps me in shape and it is a great way to meet great people. During the Title 9 triathlon I had so many words of encouragement during the race from other women. I love that! I also love the challenges that you can encounter along the way! Like putting shorts over my wet swim suit not realizing that the water was going to stretch the shorts out. I had to hold my shorts up during the entire run! What a picture that was.

Goals for 2009 - I have set a goal of three triathlons in 2009 and my goal is to finish. I am pretty slow and I have resigned myself to just take in the entire experience at my own pace. I completed my first half marathon in 2008 and plan to complete a marathon in 2009.



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TRICLUB CORNER: MAX'S 2009 TRICLUB RACE SERIES

Tri Clubs attending Max Performance Events will be eligible for the Tri Club Series with a bevy of extra perks, including:

- Race series has 4 Divisions!
- \$\$\$ for clubs placing in the top 3 of EACH Division at the conclusion of the season
- Tent Space at each Max Race Expo - first 3 clubs registering 10 or more members for the race
- Preferential positioning in the Transition Area for your Club
- Attendance Bonus for any club that attends with greater than 15 members at any event!
- Not racing, but want to volunteer? Contact us to learn about volunteer bonuses toward future Max Races!
info@maxperformanceonline.com

Club Series Guidelines

Club Divisions

Division 1 >90 members
Division 2 26-89
Division 3 <25
Division 4 Women Only

Point System

Clubs will earn points for members placing in the top 5 of their respective age group:

- 1st Place: 6 points
- 2nd Place: 5 points
- 3rd Place: 4 points
- 4th Place: 3points
- 5th Place: 2 points
- 1/2 participation point for each member finishing a race

Cash Prizes

So, here's how it works. Your club attends Max Races and earns points toward the end of season total. The Top Three teams in each Division, yes, each Division, get cash prizes below! Max is willing to put up some serious cash for local clubs, so get your team members out there!

End of Season Awards for each Division

- 1st Place: \$1000
- 2nd Place: \$700
- 3rd Place: \$500

Want more info? Further guidelines and information can be obtained from Max by emailing race_info@maxperformanceonline.com.

Be sure to check out Max's 2009 races which are now open for registration!

Be well,

Tim Richmond

*RD, Max Performance
617.797.2215*

1 FREE MONTH OF COACHING!



1 Free Month of Coaching from B&S Fitness!

B&S Fitness, located in Salem, MA will help you learn about different training methods and how to apply them, as well as be a guide and mentor as you head off on the road to optimum health!

B&S Fitness Features:

- Local and Virtual Coaching**
- Certified Tri-Coach since 2001**
- Over 700 triathletes trained**
- Numerous Beginner athletes coached**
- Average Coaching contract is 3-months but we're flexible!**

More details can be found at www.bnsfitness.com
or please call us at (978) 204-8588!

*B&S Fitness
15 Maple St
Salem, MA
(978) 204-8588*

RACE WITH MAX TO WIN A QUINTANA ROO FRAMESET!



QR &

Max's Official Bike Sponsor **Quintana Roo** and **Quad Multisport** are giving away a QR Lucero Lite frameset at the end of the 2009 season!

Here's how it works:

Race with Max and you are entered into the drawing. The more you race with us, the better your chances at winning this great frameset! At the end of the season, we'll randomly pick the winner.

This is a just another reason to join Max in 2009!

MAX PARTNERS WITH ACTIVE RECOVERY BOSTON



I want to train, but an injury is holding me back.... HELP!!!

Max Performance is excited to announce a new partnership with Active Recovery Boston, injury experts who will help get you back on the road. At A.R.B. Dr. Grace Steinley and Dr. Kate Kelly, both avid triathletes, employ expert soft tissue injury assessment, diagnosis and treatment.

Soft tissue (muscles, tendons, ligaments, fascia, and nerves) is involved in all kinds of injuries. It is often the major contributor to headaches, back pain, tendinitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, iliotibial band syndrome, shin splints, and plantar fasciitis.

Dr. Steinley and Dr. Kelly recognize that any pain or dysfunction you develop can be detrimental to your daily activities, your athletic performance, or your overall well being. Their goal is to provide you with a complete and accurate diagnosis. From there, they will work with you to develop a cutting edge treatment plan that will enable you to function at your optimal potential.

Schedule your appointment today!

Active Recovery Boston
294 Washington St, Suite 354
Boston, MA 02108
617.423.3370

www.activerecoveryboston.com

info@ActiveRecoveryBoston.com

PREVIOUS MAX NEWSLETTERS AVAILABLE!

Prior newsletters are available on our website.

Some well received topics included:

- Maximize balance and prevent injury -
- The Real Skinny on Aerodynamics -
 - How to have a faster bike split -
 - Potpourri of training tips -

Simply [Click Here](#) to see all prior newsletters.