



Tri Swim Coach Newsletter

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Update

Dear Tri Swim Coach subscriber,



As we are knee-deep in the holiday season, for many of us our thoughts and interests have temporarily shifted from workouts to holiday parties, family obligations, and travel. I think this is a good time for a little motivation, and I came across an article that gives some good ideas on winter training to keep you going into the new year. I hope this newsletter finds you in good health and good spirits.

Happy Holidays!

Kevin

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Coaching Center: Winging it in the Winter

by Lance Watson
TriathlonGold.com
This report filed January 15, 2003

Winter can be a frustrating time for a triathlete. Not only is there a near absence of competitive triathlon opportunities, but also the weather can often throw a monkey wrench into your training.

The key is to be flexible and roll with the punches. First off, you need to establish a mental focus for training throughout the winter, one, which does not focus on specific workouts, but rather has more holistic vision of what you want to accomplish throughout the winter months.

The best laid plans...

You know the drill: As the alarm goes off and you pull yourself out of your warm, inviting bed, give yourself a self a hearty high-five. Today, you are really doing it! No more talking about it, you are going to the early morning swim workout and you deserve to be proud of yourself.

You slip on your warm clothes, grab a small breakfast, and head out the door. You take your first two steps toward a faster swim time and realize that you are already knee deep in cold water... well okay, snow, but you get the point. The two feet of

snow that fell overnight means that there is no way that your car is going to make it to the pool, let alone the end of your driveway!

Welcome to winter!

So how do you cope when the weather disrupts your training plans? You have two choices, sulk and do nothing, or keep that positive attitude and adapt. If you would like to choose the first option, then there is no need to continue with this article. However, if you are one of those who see "problems" as "opportunities," then read on!

The power of adaptation

Be flexible. Roll with the punches. A small amount of home equipment can salvage a missed workout and help keep your motivation levels topped up.

For a number of triathletes, the winter is the off-season, but for an increasingly larger group of people the winter is becoming a time in which to build strength and endurance so that come warmer weather they will be fitter and faster. If you have chosen to use the winter to train, then it is important that you have written out your short and long-term goals for winter training. As the weather can often play havoc with anything that has to do with the outdoors, it is important that you keep a level head about training.

If you can't get outside for your 45-minute tempo run because there is two of snow everywhere, then just go and run in the snow and enjoy yourself. One, two, or even three winter workouts do not make or break a season, so don't allow yourself to stress over the weather. The fact that you are following a training routine throughout the winter is the most important aspect of winter training.

Of course, as you increase your skill level, and compete at increasingly higher levels, your training should be a reflection of where you would like to be competing. It is for that reason that many of my elite athletes travel to Australia for winter training camps, thus avoiding the pitfalls that come along in winter. However, for the average triathlete, swimming and running throughout the winter will provide you with a great base on which to build your summer fitness.

However, for those days that leaving the house aren't an option, then a small amount of home equipment can allow you to have a solid two or three workout day! Starting with the inexpensive; stretch cords, a Swiss ball, some free weights, a mirror, and a little ingenuity. Stretch cords (which look like surgical tubing) can be used quite effectively to help enhance your swim strength and technique.

There are many small exercises that can be completed to increase the strength of the small muscles that often get overworked in swimming. By strengthening these muscles you will help to prevent any overuse injuries associated with your swim stroke. The stretch cords can also be used to provide a degree of resistance while you practice your swim stroke. By looping the cords around a stationary object you can use a mirror and practice different aspects of your stroke, watching yourself to make sure that you are doing it perfectly.

This practice will translate well when you are back into the pool. A Swiss ball can also be used to help stretch and strengthen your body. By performing a number of well-known exercises on the Swiss ball, you will be able to strengthen your core muscles (the ones around your tummy), which are an integral part for maintaining proper technique in all three of triathlon's disciplines. And with free weights, you will be able to perform any number of strengthening exercises to help increase your power on the bike and run.

For a little bit more money, you can invest in a wind/mad/CompuTrainer for your bike and a treadmill for your feet. With either of these, you will not have an excuse to miss any important workouts. And for fun, throw on a video of the Tour de France or the Olympic Triathlon and race Lance or Simon to the finish line, increasing your speed when they increase theirs and trying to out-sprint them to the line!

There are a number of ways to keep training when the weather says you shouldn't. If you are looking for an excuse, you will find one, but if you are looking for a solution, then you will always succeed!

Good luck and enjoy the winter!

TSC Tip #10

Keep the Feel

If swimming is your toughest sport, it is important to "keep the feel" for the water, and get in the water at least every other day (no, showers and baths don't count!) This way, your body maintains its kinesthetic awareness of being balanced in water.



Pick up The Complete Guide to Triathlon Swimming for the Holidays!

Get started on your swim training plan and start improving immediately!
OR buy a tri-friend or relative that last-minute gift online!

The Guide includes:

- An introduction to triathlon swimming and preparation for your first triathlon OR changing your stroke and workout routines to get the most from your swim
- A training plan designed for a 25-yard or 25-meter pool to prepare you for an Olympic Distance race
- Common swimming myths dispelled
- Drills in the pool and exercises on land to make you a better swimmer
- Tips on how to get the most out of your own training plan or master's program



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