



Tri Swim Coach Newsletter

In This Issue:

Issue #43- June 29, 2005

- [Beginner Fun](#)
- [Open Letter](#)
- [Tip of the Month](#)
- [Coming Soon: Hardcopy Versions of The Complete Guide and bonus books!](#)

Beginner Fun

Dear Friend,

TriSwimCoach

As a beginner swimmer, with all the challenges involved, it is easy to forget to have fun!

Triathlon is a FUN sport, and discovering your potential is a big part of that fun.

Remember, getting past obstacles in your training is going to help you tremendously in life. If you do not come from a swimming background, have no fear! In Triathlon, swimming is not a "necessary evil", it is the sport full of the most technical challenges that you as a triathlete must overcome.

You can overcome these challenges no matter what your background!

So enjoy the challenges, have patience, and you will break through and achieve all your goals.

Enjoy!
Kevin

"Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal."

-Henry Ford

[Click Here to go to the Discussion Forum \(don't forget to Bookmark it!\)](#)

Open Letter

I caught this post on a message board, but I thought it applied to the theme today so I'm sharing it here:

"An Open Letter to the Guy at the Pool This Morning

Once you caught your breath, it occurred to you that finishing even a short triathlon might be harder than you thought. After a few "laps" you thought, "I can't believe I'm so out of shape."

I saw you. You were at the pool this morning for the same reason you're reading this: you've been thinking about doing a triathlon. You haven't swum since you were a kid, so you got up early and came to the pool at the Y before work. I knew as soon as I saw you. How did I know? I was you a year ago. I went through the same thing. The only reason middle aged guys who aren't particularly fit and who don't know the protocol for getting into a lane show up at the pool at the Y at 6:30 in the morning is because they're thinking of doing a triathlon. I've asked them. Every single one has answered in the affirmative.

At first you noticed that everyone was wearing skin tight Lycra suits and that the people your age seemed to be in a lot better shape than you. You realized that you may just look as out of place as you felt. Rather than just get in, you stood at the edge of the pool looking around for someone or something to tell you it was ok to get in a lane. Once the lifeguard or another swimmer explained that pool's particular variation of lane etiquette, you got in and proceeded to slowly fight your way to the other end of the pool, turn around at the wall and make it most of the way back before standing up on the bottom out of breath and shocked at how hard it was.

Once you caught your breath, it occurred to you that finishing even a short triathlon might be harder than you thought. You tried a few more times, and after a few "laps" you got out, looked at the other people swimming so effortlessly back and forth and thought, "I can't believe I'm so out of shape."

This is when the decision gets made: Are you going to do a triathlon or not? Sometimes you go back to the pool for one or two more tries; usually you don't come back at all. I haven't seen you back at the pool after 2 weeks. You've given up the idea of doing a triathlon.

If you gave up because swimming is too hard, that's too bad because you're wrong. It isn't easy, but becoming passable isn't all that tough. Swimming is different than cycling and running; starting from scratch, with no technique, you're just not going to get very far. It's going to take you anywhere from 3 to 6 weeks of going to the pool at 2-3 times a week and swimming for 10 to 20 minutes in small chunks before you start to build anything like endurance. Six weeks, tops. It's really hard at first and then, after a few weeks, there's a breakthrough session where you feel like you can just keep swimming. And you do. You swim for half an hour straight, no breaks.

The feeling of being an outsider in an alien environment goes away right then. You feel as if you belong there. You are a swimmer. You don't even feel silly walking through the locker room in Lycra jammers.

Read all you can about swimming technique, buy a book or DVD, or, even better, take some lessons. But don't stop trying because it seems ridiculously hard at first. Don't let those first few attempts stop you. Getting through those 3-6 weeks can be tough mentally and physically, but you can get through them.

You know the pictures you've seen of a race right before the start with all those triathlete swimmers standing around in wetsuits and colored swim caps? At least half of those people went through the exact same awkward first day at the pool that you had. They just decided not to let it stop them. They decided that triathlon is about overcoming mental and physical challenges, and swimming was number one on the list.

You can either be the guy who thought he might like to do a triathlon but gave up because swimming seemed too hard, or you can be one of those people who finished a triathlon despite those first few practice swims.

Go back to the pool."

[Click here for help and The Complete Guide to Triathlon Swimming!](#)

Tip of the Month

Extend with each arm stroke. This may not feel natural at first, but extending your arm and eventually gliding a little longer will help you conserve energy and get more out of each stroke. Many beginners slap their arm down on the water upon recovery, which will force your arm down in the water, instead of forward. Keep thinking extension and you will eventually have a longer, more fluid stroke!

[Click here for a 12 week plan and The Complete Guide to Triathlon Swimming!](#)



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