

Hudson Valley Triathlon Club

Mission Statement: To help individuals (beginner to advanced) reach their health, fitness and competitive goals through the sport of triathlon.

Volume IV, Issue No. 2

February 2004

IN A FEW WORDS

Dear Triathletes,

Wow! Can you smell spring arriving? How about those 40-degree days? Nice. All around the country the indoor sprint tri's are underway and the fitness tests begin. Either you're ready, or it's back to base-building. Regardless, it's so exciting to feel the energy gathering for another season; group meetings, longer days of sunlight and the warmth on that first long ride. Ah! Yep, we're triathletes and we're the most fortunate people on Earth! See ya out there.

Sincerely,



Mark Wilson

Founder/President, Hudson Valley Triathlon Club

Total Immersion-Director of Coaching Development & Triathlon Camps

POSE Method of Running Level II Certified Coach

USA Triathlon Level II (Pending) Certified Coach

HUDSON VALLEY TRIATHLON CLUB



Disclaimer: Articles in this newsletter **do not necessarily** represent the viewpoint of the president of Hudson Valley Triathlon Club.

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Featured Athlete: John Wheeler

By Mark Wilson

Are triathletes smarter than most people? Is it possible that triathletes have a predisposition for number crunching and industrial athletic gear? Are they used to mental overload and seek out ways to generate it? Well, John Wheeler, the HVTC Featured Athlete of the Month is one smart cookie, and he's finding ways to nourish his intellectual appetite through the sport of triathlon. It's also been stated that travel is the best educator. Since John's been around the world (literally), that pretty much puts him off the scale when it comes to brain power. Here's his story.

John was born in Lexington, Kentucky and spent most of his early childhood in the Midwest and in Texas. By the time John graduated from high school he'd attended 13 different schools! When he was 12 his family lived in Costa Rica where they lived for four years. When his family returned to the States from Costa Rica he finished high school in a small town called Petersburg, Indiana with one stoplight and about 4,000 people. John attended the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, NY. He graduated with a Marine Engineering Degree and a minor in nuclear

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engineering. He presently lives in Highland, NY with his wife Jeanette and his 12-year old daughter, Ally.

In high school he competed in football and wrestling. In college he discovered rugby and played for five years through broken bones, joint separations, and lots of stitches. John believes the camaraderie amongst rugby players is similar to what he's found with triathletes; great competition and great friendships! (More teeth in triathlon, though.) He says, "In both sports there are winners and survivors, but no losers."

During and after college he worked as an engineer on merchant ships and sailed throughout the Americas, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. For the last twenty years he's worked in the nuclear power industry as a control room supervisor, instructor, and manager. In his current position as Director of Training & Development for Entergy Nuclear Northeast, he oversees the employee training and professional development at the five nuclear plants in the northern US. (Wow, that's impressive.) John really enjoys what he does and gets much satisfaction from watching people solve problems and making effective decisions.

When John has the time, he enjoys tinkering with web design and computers and has built a few PC's (including two that are water-cooled). He laughs about it because he's always looking for an excuse to build a new computer or upgrade one of the four they have running at home.

John's first triathlon was a sprint tri last June at Harriman State Park. He can't describe the exhilaration! Initially, he told himself that he'd do one triathlon, and then decide if he liked it. It wasn't long before he was planning his whole season! And, of course, there are a few people who think he's nuts for doing triathlons, but more than that he thinks they're amazed that a couch potato like him could make that kind of change! It had been 17 years since he'd done anything physical other than recreational biking and an occasional hike in the woods. This is how it started, at his first race during a 40 mph downhill he remembers thinking, "'Oh #@\$!' I forgot to check my wheel quick releases!" And then at his first Williams Lake triathlon he forgot to take his bike helmet in T2. It took him 20 seconds to figure out why people were yelling at him! "That was pretty embarrassing!"

About a year and a half ago he found himself in a very stressful set of circumstances, an extremely challenging situation at work combined with a serious illness of his step-father. He realized his focus had drifted away from the things and people that meant the most to him. He decided to make fitness one of his priorities and started on a "recovery plan." He's a very goal-oriented person (See, he's made for triathlon!) and he set some 12-week fitness goals. On the first day he couldn't jog

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more than 100 yards without stopping to gasp for air! Twelve weeks later and 30 pounds lighter he needed a new, more challenging goal...a sprint triathlon! He admits to becoming slightly, okay completely, obsessed with the sport.

John's been totally blown away by the people in the sport. He's made more new friends in the last year than he had in the prior 20. He feels like he makes at least one new friend at every race! His focus has been on technique, so last winter he took a POSE running clinic which helped him immensely. This winter he's working on swimming technique and building a solid aerobic base. Triathlons make him feel more alive, grateful and blessed to experience the training and racing in triathlon, even when he's hurting! John got his brother-in-law hooked, too. They're meeting in Clermont, FL in early April to do an Olympic distance event.

For John, 2003 year was his first triathlon season. He did four sprints (Harriman, West Point, and two at Williams Lake), and three Olympic distance races (Hudson Valley, Mighty Hamptons, and Danbury). The Hudson Valley Tri was challenging because it was his first Olympic distance and the swim was so tough! This year his goals are to do the Tupper Lake half-Ironman, SOS and he's contemplating Lake Placid for 2005. John states, "It would be great if triathlon WAS my job!" However, he's always reading, researching, or thinking about triathlon. John's family has declared themselves "The Food Family" because they're usually planning the next meal as they're eating the present one! "Hey, I just plain love food. That's one of the biggest benefits to triathlon training; you HAVE to eat a lot!"

John feels very fortunate to have found HVTC. "To have such a talented group of friends who are so willing to share what they know with the newbie's is an amazing stroke of luck!" Well, all that travelin' finally paid off. Welcome home! Thanks, John.

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2004 RACE SCHEDULE

Bold = USA Triathlon Sanctioned

(Need to find a race somewhere in the U.S.? For a complete listing of USAT Sanctioned Races with event location and contact information go to www.usatriathlon.org and click “events,” then “events calendar.”)

MAY

St. Croix Half Ironman-U. S. Virgin Islands (5/2/04) S 1.2mi., B 56mi., R 13.1mi.
www.stcroixtriathlon.com

King of the Hill Xterra Triathlon-Lebanon NJ (5/8/04) S .5 mi., B 12 mi., R 4 mi.
www.xterraplanet.com/race/schedule.html

Columbia Triathlon-Ellicott City, MD (5/23/04) S 1.5k, Bike 41k, R 10k
www.tricolumbia.org

JUNE

Middlebury Triathlon-Middlebury, VT (6/6/04) S 400 yds. (Pool), B 12.5 mi., R 2.9 mi.
www.vermontsun.com

Mighty Montauk Triathlon-Montauk, NY (6/?/04) S 1mi, B 20mi, R 6.2mi
www.swimpower.com

Blackwater Eagleman Triathlon-Cambridge, MD (6/13/04) S 1.2mi, B 56mi, R13.1mi
www.tricolumbia.org

19th Annual NY Tri Series #1-Harriman State Park (6/13/04) S ½ mi., B 16 mi., R 3 mi.
www.nytc.org

Ludlow Boys & Girls Club Triathlon-Ludlow, MA (6/?/04) S ½ mi., B 14 mi., R 4 mi.
www.firm-racing.com

HVTC Williams Lake Sprint Tri Point Series #1-Rosendale, NY (6/16/04) S 700 yds., B 12 mi., R 2 mi.
www.hvtc.net

Highland Triathlon-Yulan, NY (6/19/04) S ½ mi., B 15 mi., R 4 mi.
www.transitiontimes.com

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Tri the Tri-Danbury, CT (6/19/04) Sprint www.americansportsevents.com

Tupper Lake Tinman Triathlon-Tupper Lake, NY (6/26/04) S 1.2 mi., B 56 mi., R 13.1 mi. www.tupperlakeinfo.com

Mooseman Triathlon-Gilford, NH (6/26/04) S ¼ mi., B 15 mi., R 3.5 mi. www.timbermantri.com

Mooseman Xterra Triathlon-Gilford, NH (6/27/04) S ¼ mi., B 5.5 mi., R 3 mi. www.timbermantri.com

Vermont Sun Triathlon-?, VT (6/27/04) S 600 yds., B 14 mi., R 3.1 mi. www.vermontsuntriathlon.com

JULY

Vermont Sun Triathlon-?, VT (7/11/04) S 600 yds., B 14 mi., R 3.1 mi. www.vermontsun.com

Try the Tri-Bristol, RI (7/10/04) Sprint www.americansportsevents.com

Hudson Valley Triathlon-Kingston, NY(7/11/04) S 1.5k, B 26 mi., R 10k www.nytc.org

Try the Tri-Danbury, CT (8/17/04) Sprint www.americansportsevents.com

HVTC Williams Lake Sprint Tri Point Series #2-Rosendale, NY (7/14/04) S 700 yds., B 12 mi., R 2 mi. www.hvtc.net.

Pine Bush Triathlon, Pine Bush, NY (7/?/04) S 325 yds., B 11.5, R 3.25

Ironman USA Lake Placid Ironman USA (U.S. Ironman Championship)-Lake Placid, NY (7/25/04) S 2.4 mi., B 112 mi., R 26.2 mi. www.ironmanusa.com

Vermont Sun Triathlon-?, VT (7/25/04) S 600 yds. B 14 mi., R 3.1 mi. www.vermontsun.com

AUGUST

19th New York Triathlon Race #2-Harriman State Park, NY (8/15/04) S ½ mi., B 16 mi., R 3mi. www.nytc.org

www.hvtc.net

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Try the Tri-Bristol, RI (8/14/04) Sprint www.americansportsevents.com

HVTC Williams Lake Sprint Tri Point Series #3-Rosendale, NY (8/18/04) S 700 yds, B 12 mi, R 2 mi. www.hvtc.net.

Try the Tri-Danbury, CT (8/17/04) Sprint www.americansportsevents.com

Timberman Half-Ironman Triathlon-Gilford, NH (8/21/04) S 1.2 mi., B 56 mi., R 13.1 mi. www.timbermantri.com

Timberman Sprint Triathlon-Gilford, NH (8/22/04) S 1/3 mi., B 15 mi., R 3 mi. www.timbermantri.com

West Point Triathlon-West Point, NY (8/5/04) S 800 m, B 25k, R 5k www.usma.edu/uscc/dca/clubs/trit/index.html

Cranberry Country Triathlon-Lakeville, MA (8/29/04) S .8 mi., B 24.9 mi., R 10k (USAT New England Regional Club Championship) www.cranberrycountrytri.com

Lake Dunmore Triathlon-Salisbury, VT (8/15/04) S .5 mi., B 27.5 mi., R 5 mi. www.vermontsun.com

Great Keewaydin Triathlon-Keewaydin State Park(8/1/04) S 1mi., B 42mi., R 9.5 mi. www.vermontsun.com

Grafton Lakes Off Road Triathlon-Grafton, NY (8/8/04) S 0.9mi, Mtn B 14mi, R 5mi. www.skyhighadventures.com

SEPTEMBER

Vermont State Triathlon-?, VT (9/5/04) S 1.5k, B 27.5 mi., R 10k www.vermontsun.com

S.O.S.-New Paltz, NY(9/12/04) B 30mi., R 19mi., S .5mi.,R.7mi. www.ulster.net/~sosnyta/

HVTC Williams Lake Sprint Tri Point Series #4-Rosendale, NY (9/15/04) S 700yds., B 12 mi., R 2mi. www.hvtc.net.

Mighty Hamptons-Sag Harbor, NY (9/19/04) S 1.5k, B 38k, R 10k www.swimpower.com

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USAT National Age Group Championships-Shreveport, LA (9/18/04) S 1.5k, B 40K, R 10K www.usatriathlon.org

Skylands Triathlon-Clinton, NJ (9/19/04) S ½ mi., B 14.1 mi., R 5k www.lin-mark.com

Danskin Triathlon-Sandy Hook, NJ (9/?/04)

Firmman Rhode Island (9/?/04) 1.2 mi., B 56 mi., R 13.1 mi. www.firm-racing.com

Granite Ledges Triathlon-Wellington State Park, NH (9/25/04) S 1.5k., B 44k, R 10k www.timbermantri.com

Lobsterman Triathlon-Freeport, ME (9/11-12/04) S 1.5k, B 40k, R 10k www.lobstermantriathlon.com

Westchester Triathlon-Rye, NY (9/26/04) S 1.5k, B 40k, R 10k www.swimpower.com

OCTOBER

Colonial Series-Danbury, CT (10/3/04) S 1.5K, B 40K, R 10K www.americansportsevents.com

Ironman Triathlon World Championship (10/16/04) S 2.4 mi., B 112 mi., R 26.2 mi. www.ironinfo@ironmanlive.com

Xterra World Championship-Maui, HI (10/26/03) S 1.5k, Mtn. B 30k, R 11k

Hawaiian Double-Ironman Plus Xterra = The Double

NOVEMBER

Ironman Florida-Panama City, FL (11/8/03) S 2.4 mi., B 112 mi., R 26.2 mi. www.ironanlive.com

Gold's Gym Indoor Triathlon-Newburgh, NY (11/15/03) S 400 yds., B 8 m., R 5k www.goldsgym.com

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AT THE RACES

HVTC wants to know how you did! Please send your incredible results. Below is the information required. HVTC Annual Awards are based on the results that are posted in the newsletter. Good luck to everyone this season and thanks for your stats!

Send results to: Markstriclub@hotmail.com

1. Name of race?
2. Date of race?
3. Overall male & finish time?
4. Overall female & finish time?
5. Swim, bike, run distances?
6. Your finish time?
7. Your Age-Group place?
8. City, state and/or country of race?
9. USAT sanctioned?
10. Race website?!?!?

RESULTS

Are You Ready For 2004???

2002 USA TRIATHLON NATIONAL AGE-GROUP RANKINGS

(To become a nationally ranked triathlete you must be a member of USA Triathlon and have participated in **at least three USA Triathlon Sanctioned** races that year; i.e. Columbia Triathlon, Greater Hartford Triathlon and the S.O.S.)

<u>Name (Honors)</u>	<u>Age Group</u>	<u>A.G. Plc.</u>	<u>Nat'l Ranking</u>
Gregory Sautner	M20-24	53	89.1200
Alex Sherwood HM	M25-29	111	87.9700
Mark Wilson	M35-39	366	82.8100
Henry Collins	M35-39	561	80.2900
Thomas DeHaan	M40-44	532	78.6200
Bill Pape HM	M55-59	43	78.3400
Lauren Warren	F35-39	115	77.1100
Mark Vesery	M40-44	842	74.7900
Jay Fetherolf	M45-49	463	73.3900
Carlos Perez	M25-29	842	71.2600
Kathryn Loyer	F35-39	310	70.85.00
Mary DeNitto	F50-54	38	69.9200
Tony McGinty	M40-44	1,816	58.8700

HM-Honorable Mention in the U.S.A.

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2003 2nd ANNUAL HUDSON VALLEY TRIATHLON CLUB AWARDS BANQUET

2003 HVTC Volunteer of the Year Award: **Carlos Osorio**

2003 HVTC Most Improved Award: **Tom deHaan**

2003 HVTC Rookie of the Year Award: **Doug Thompson**

2003 HVTC Honorable Mention Award: **Lauren Warren**

2003 HVTC Honorable Mention Award: **Myron Baker**

2003 HVTC Honorable Mention Award: **Bill Pape**

2003 HVTC Honorable Mention Award: **Mike Halstead**

2003 HVTC Female Triathlete of the Year Award: **Mary DeNitto**

2003 HVTC Male Triathlete of the Year Award: **Greg Sautner**

Awards are distributed based on race results reported to markstriclub@hotmail.com.

CLASSIFIEDS

Triathlon Coach Available. Reach your highest athletic potential! Efficient swimming, strong cycling, effortless running. Call **Mark Wilson, USAT Certified Coach, Total Immersion-Director of Coaching Development, POSE Method of Running Certified Coach** at 845-679-8602 or markstriclub@hotmail.com. Call or e-mail today!

Bike Trainers Needed. If anyone has a bicycle trainer that they want to get rid of, the newly formed Arlington High School Triathlon Club needs them to help train members during the winter training session. Your help is much appreciated. Please contact oa1ptekin@optonline.net.

Softride For Sale. Rocket TT, size medium. The frame, fork and bars all have less than 100 miles on them. The bars are Profile Carbon X. Wheels are Rolf Vector Pro, 650's. Components are Dura Ace 9 speed. Price is firm at \$1,750.00. Call 518-678-5609.

<p><u>CAUTION:</u> Participating in the sport of triathlon may cause radiant health and spiritual well-being.</p>
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **2004 HVTC Williams Lake Summer Triathlon Point Series.** Points will be awarded accordingly; Male/Female 1st-10, 2nd-9, 3rd-8, 4th-7, 5th-6 and all other finishers will receive 3 points each. Members must race in at least 3 out of 4 races to be considered for Top 3 Overall Awards.
- **NEW! Total Immersion DVD's!** Freestyle Made Easy, Happy Laps & Four Strokes. To order call 800-609-7946 or online at www.totalimmersion.net.
- **HVTC Tri-Gear For Sale!** If you'd like to sell triathlon gear on the HVTC website, send a digital photo of the equipment with details (contact info, specs, etc.) and it'll be put up ASAP. There will be a 10% charge for sales resulting from the HVTC site.
- **2004 Total Immersion Tri-Camp Schedule:** February 23-28 Clermont, FL at the USAT National Training Center; August 9-14 Killington, VT at Beattie's Trailside Lodge.
- **When in doubt** whether the Lake swim/race is on, always check for an HVTC directory e-mail by 4 p.m. that day. Consider it "on" unless you see "**NO SWIM.**"
- **Total Immersion Freestyle Workshops** in our neck of the woods: To register call 800-609-7946. Apr. 3-4 Waltham, MA. Apr. 3-4 Brooklyn, NY.
- **Dean Theodore** has created an amazing gear bag. **HVTC** gets a 10% discount, so type "dean" (lower case) where it says coupon code when filling out the order form at Triathlonbag.com.
- **Important message from USAT...**To receive a \$3.00 club discount on USA Triathlon membership one must apply by mail or fax, **NOT** online!
- **HVTC \$110.00 membership** is valid from January 1st-December 31st.

SWIM WITH TERRY

By Terry Laughlin

How Far Can You Swim in an Hour? In my case, exactly as far as I thought I could.

As I've written several times in articles about distance swimming, what's important isn't how fast you can swim; it's how long you can maintain a reasonable speed – not a fast speed, but not terribly slow either. Consistency and economy matter far more than raw speed. Based on that, I certainly proved once again that I was born to be a distance swimmer while doing the USMS One Hour Swim Championship.

U.S. Masters Swimming offers several "postal meets" each year, in which you can compete against other swimmers, without ever leaving your own pool. No officials, no

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starting blocks and a chance to measure yourself against your peers, all for the cost of a postage stamp.

Among these is the One Hour Swim. Any time between Jan 1 and Jan. 31, at any 25-yard, 25 meter or 50-meter pool, with a friend or loved one sitting poolside to count your laps and verify the distance covered, you may swim as far as you can in one hour. As a pure distance swimmer (i.e. seeming to lack even a single “fast-twitch” muscle fiber) I have long wanted to try this event, but had never swum for a nonstop hour in a pool under any circumstances. I’ve done open water races that lasted much longer, but an hour of pool swimming is much more of a challenge. All those flip turns, and the lack of environmental stimulus. But, since I’m training seriously this year for open water races covering distances up to 10K (which could take 2 hours and 30 minutes) I thought this was the year to tackle the Hour Swim.

I set a goal of completing 4400 yards in the allotted hour. The Gunks Masters, where I train, had done 30-minute swims on two occasions in the fall. I swam 2175 yards in October and raised that to 2200 yards in November. I worked fairly hard to get that 2200 in, so I thought it would be a good accomplishment to be able to maintain that pace for twice as long.

Cutting to the chase, I touched the wall at 60:00, having completed exactly 4400 yards. How’s that for knowing yourself?

I had only a few minutes to warm up as I did the swim during a regularly scheduled Masters workout, which is only an hour long, and a youth team has the pool immediately after. The Masters coach gave me my own lane and set up a digital clock on a poolside bench where I’d be able to see it. My wife, Alice, sat by the clock to count my laps and note my splits. And off I went.

Never having done an unbroken swim of that length, in the pool, I began conservatively. Even so, by the time 20:00 elapsed and I was approaching my first mile I was feeling a bit fatigued. I knew that to reach 4400 I’d have to maintain a pace of 41 seconds per 50 yards. The pace clock was visible as I approached mid-pool. I decided to look for my time just as I took my 7th stroke on each odd length. I paid attention mainly to the final digit on the clock. If it went from 1 to 2 to 3 on successive 50s, I would know I was holding the 41-second pace. And for the most part that’s what I did.

Fatigue Management

While those 41-second laps were clicking steadily off, I was sensing increasing fatigue. Going harder – particularly with 35 minutes still to swim – wasn’t an option. The only way to maintain my pace as fatigue increased was to find easier ways to swim the same speed. I did that in a variety of ways:

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1. Better turns. I was inconsistent on my turns the first 20 minutes, but as I swam farther, I became better at judging the walls. Over the final 40 minutes, I'd estimate that I hit 90% of my turns solidly. I also reduced the effort by keeping my turn radius quite small – less water resistance and better maintenance of precious momentum through the turn and pushoff. My focal point for doing so was to have my heels clear the water by the smallest possible margin as I somersaulted and to hit the wall quietly with my feet.
2. Adjusting stroke count. I maintained a steady 14 spl for the first 10 minutes or so, then found my stroke count rising to 15 on the odd lengths (some pools seem to have a “current” in one direction, particularly in the end lane where I was swimming), but still at 14 on the even lengths. That held through about 35 minutes. For the final 25 minutes I maintained a consistent 15spl going both ways, except for a few lengths at 16spl at around 50 minutes. The changing stroke count affected my timing on turns. The first few times I took 15 I jammed the turn slightly. So I had to turn tighter and faster. At the other end, where I was still turning at 14 strokes, I was approaching the wall just a bit short, so I adjusted by rolling a bit more slowly, which allowed me to carry a bit closer to the wall.
3. Relaxing. A long swim, with many flip turns, always causes a bit of aerobic distress over time. I began to feel that as I closed in on 30:00. I was also feeling just a bit of muscular fatigue. I found that putting more emphasis on exhaling helped me get a bit more air in. And thinking of my recovery arm as a “dead weight” staying relaxed until I entered and firmed up for the catch also preserved energy.

Cocoon of Concentration

During the second half of the swim I found I could put myself into a “zone” in which it was possible to maintain a steady pace with less sense of mounting fatigue by narrowing my awareness. I actually swam a good part of each length with my eyes closed – or if not closed, shielded from distractions. Only on the 7th stroke of the odd lengths – when I took a peek at the pace clock – was I conscious of anything intruding on my awareness other than – “relax the arm, exhale fully, slip the hand in quietly and feel your grip, tuck and roll gently at the wall.”

And so the laps went by, one after another, all feeling remarkably consistent.

My greatest challenge came, starting at around 45 minutes when I began to feel the soleus muscle at the base of my left calf, cramping slightly as I pushed off. That became a distraction as I worried that it would go into full cramp. So I periodically flexed my foot slightly, while swimming, to try to release that tight muscle. Unfortunately, flexing the foot increases drag. At times I found myself devoting more attention to that troublesome muscle than to maintaining my rhythmic, economical flow. And each time, my turns would be a bit poorer, my stroke feel a bit more ragged, my stroke count would increase to 16...and the final digit on that pace clock would increase by 2 or 3 over the previous 50, rather than 1 – meaning a 50 swum in 42 or 43 seconds. In any case that muscle never did go into full cramp...until I was putting on my shoes in the locker room.

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Near the end, I passed the pace clock and saw 57:32 on its face. I calculated quickly that if I WAS on pace to swim 4400 yards and was holding about 41 seconds per 50, that I'd need to swim my final 200 in about 2:30 (I'd been holding about 2:45 per 200) in order to beat the clock to 60:00. So I began swimming as strongly as I could. I watched the clock count up toward 60:00 and touched the wall I'd started from just as the clock stopped. I stood up and asked Alice "How far?" to which she replied "4400." I was exhilarated at having been able to project a goal pace and hit it exactly over a swim that long -- always a valuable tool for a distance swimmer.

As is a good sense of pace and here are some splits from my Hour Swim:

1st 2200 yards: 21:56; final 2200 yards 22:04

1st 1650 yards (metric mile) 22:27; 2nd 1650 yards 22:28

Splits for my eight 500s (up to 4000 yards): 6:48-6:47-6:49-6:48-6:49-6:47-6:54-6:55 (all within two seconds until I began experiencing leg cramps on the final two.)

SPONSOR BEAT

*** METZE PUBLICATION DESIGN ***	www.metzedesign.com
*** RM3 DESIGN ***	www.rm3d.com
*** LAKE KATRINE ANIMAL HOSPITAL ***	Lake Katrine, NY (845-336-4053)
*** BIG WHEEL BICYCLES ***	Lake Katrine, NY (845-382-BIGG)
*** SUNSHINE TEES ***	Kingston, NY (845-339-4455)
*** HIGH PEAKS CYCLERY ***	www.highpeakscyclery.com
*** TOTAL IMMERSION SWIMMING***	www.totalimmersion.net
*** PEAK PERFORMANCE SPORTS ***	www.peakperformancesports.net
*** USA TRIATHLON ***	www.usatriathlon.org
*** AQUA SPHERE ***	www.aquasphereusa.com
*** VERGE AMERICA LTD. ***	www.vergesport.com
*** FATS IN THE CATS ***	Lake Katrine, NY 845-336-7649
*** KINGSTON CYCLERY ***	www.kingstoncyclery.com
*** WORLD WIDE AQUATICS ***	www.worldwideaquatics.com
*** TRIATHLONBAG.COM ***	www.triathlonbag.com
*** MOBILE LIFE SUPPORT ***	www.mobilelife.com
*** TABLE ROCK TOURS & BICYCLES ***	Rosendale, NY (845-658-7832)
*** POSE TECH ***	www.poseotech.com
*** METROTRI.COM ***	www.metrotri.com
*** WILLIAMS LAKE HOTEL ***	Rosendale, NY (845-658-3101)
*** HAMMER NUTRITION, LTD. ***	www.hammernutrition.com
*** NEMIDON GEL ***	www.nemidon-usa.com

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PAPE'S PARTICULARS

By Bill Pape

A SWIM WORKOUT IS NOT FUN

Who ever says what they really think? (More specifically to triathlon, isn't the point of training not thinking?)

I will try, but for those who cannot stand to read, cannot stand to read what I usually write, or cannot stand to read with any belief reality has a right to creep into life; I will start with the conclusion of this article, so the reader to this point can avoid the rest of the article. My conclusion, and possible training tip, will be—FORM matters. I used to rebel against Terry Laughlin's emphasis on form over strength in swimming, but when I am clinging onto the pace line in a swim workout, with no more strength in my old and skinny arms, the only thing I can use is form, to try to hang on. Desperation and lack of strength teaches me to concentrate on form, like my mother's yelling taught me to vacuum my room well and make my bed neatly. Both were crises in which I responded to fear by modifying my behavior.

I will now try to describe my experience in and my conclusion from recent swim workouts.

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Whoever claims he or she likes to jump in the pool for a swim workout at night in the winter must come from another solar system, or I do, because we are not alike. Stop lying, if you claim you do, or claim it while standing on a stack of triathlon equipment, awards and articles, and then admit what solar system you hail from.

It starts with getting into the car in the dark and racing through New Jersey highways, amidst everyone else on the road driving like a serial accident maker. I feel the pain of making this choice to go to swim class against my wish to stay home and watch television under the covers with coke and pie or candy on the table next to me and the bedroom door shut. The pain continues with comments from Julie next to me in the car, criticizing my latest activities after I try to tell her something I did right during the day. Our travel speed reaches over 70mph on roads initially engineered for 40, trying to get to class on time.

I continue now with the description of the bad experience, and we have not even stepped near the cold water. The pool facility is no treat to behold. The parking lot entrance is too dark to see, so you almost miss the turn and roll us over into the brambles and a creek nearby. The driveway and parking lot has loads of potholes. I dodge anxious parents spending too much time with their kids by taking them to swim practice at night. I park and have to go through the cold, dark air into the swim building, like going through a swamp with mosquitoes to get to the bottom of a castle where a table is laid out for you in the torture chamber. Are we getting close? Not yet.

The entrance area is steamy with the smell of chlorine, such that the wood around the doors is peeling and the metal on the swim trophies, carelessly and forgottenly stuck on a shelf, is rusting. I am cold, despite the hot moisture dripping off the glass everywhere in the entrance. I am coming in here to take off my clothes to put on about a square foot of thin material, my swim trunks, to get ready to get wet and colder. But first I have to walk through the locker room. I hear little boys shouting in the shower and see them walking on their towels and clothes on the wet floor. Water drips from the ceiling pipes, so you stand in water if you want to pee at the urinal. The boys squeak loudly to try to sound older, the bullies trying to drown out the others out by raising the volume of their futile attempts at manly sounds. I'd like to shout above them, "Shut up, give it a rest, try serenity over boasting," but they would think I was speaking Latin. Each kid is striving to get the most attention from the others. It hurts that what little I hear of their workouts indicates my hard workout is something they could swim around like a shark around bait, and they are about two and a half feet tall. They and any of the men who are not triathletes change clothes with towels around their waists, nervous that anyone should steal a glance at their private parts.

Onward to the main misery, going out on deck without a winter coat and gloves, getting ready to jump in the water, rather than read about it in a book or see it on TV. Sorry I have chest hair. I feel the cold especially right there as I jump in. I always wonder why guys in the movies walk to the firing squad area. Why not struggle for life, rather than walk into range of the bullets? Why jump in the water on a winter night and try to do a workout beyond my ability?

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The first night I went to this particular workout group, led by coach Don Fink, Don put me in the third of four lanes, one lane from the fastest lane. Here's Bill, let's put him in a lane that befits his reputation. What about my reputation in grade school and high school as the kid who was best fit for a bigger kid pushing his head under water till he could not hold his breath, as a tease?

The first lap of the warm up is the worst. I cannot believe I am going through this stress, after a day of work stress. I am cold. I am alone, because you cannot talk or see very well, when you face is stuck in the water, churning water. My lane partners, after the first few laps, are already chaffing at the bit to pass me. I cheat and use flippers to save my strength in the warm up for the real part of the workout.

After the warm-up, I join the small talk, while we wait further instruction about the workout. It is my effort to win favor, so the others will not crush me. It is not really to be friendly. I do it all the time at races now, too. I am just scared and trying to bargain with impending death and destruction.

Then it finally happens, the main set. We bargain for who will lead and when to start, and clarify the reality of the assignment with Don. We start. I thought of this article during the main set of the workout a couple weeks ago. Do people ever share how it really feels to do a workout? Do people ever really convey to anyone else what it means to them to feel happy, what being lonely or thrilled feels like? I challenged myself to share the actual thoughts in an article, but will fail. I forget my feelings by the time I get out of the water at the end of the night, or while I still remember, I wonder if anyone else feels the same anyway, so why say you are from Mars.

At first, I am gliding and it is easy. I went too easy on the warm-up, so finally picking up speed without the aid of the flippers is a new experience. I am scared but surprised that I can pick it up and that I am actually in the group, doing IT.

But then there is the counting. How do you face the parts of the count. In the beginning, you have all of the count to go, but you are not tired. You are looking over the edge of the cliff, but cannot yet feel the fear of the fall. It should feel worst near halfway to the middle, because you do not have half of the set done, but you have already swum enough to be tired. But your mind overrides at this point, in self-protection, since it is too awful to face. In the first parts of the set, you get in on time, keeping up with the interval pace, but by the second or third part, you start to see the truth of the interval time. You have to add power to make it into the wall to be able to be on time for the next part. You play out some of your power to hang on, afraid of the humiliation of being dropped before you did much of the workout.

Now you are in the heat of battle. Literally. Your body is actually creating heat against the cold water, and you forget being cold, even if you still are. You take in a few drinks of chemical mix, I mean, pool water, but forget it, just like you forget getting scraped by branches when someone is chasing you through the woods.

During the main set of that workout and subsequent ones, I can imagine how my face looks. When I was a spectator of my college basketball team, I noticed the face of one particular player. It was blank. You could not see any emotion or direction in it. I must

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have a similar face during the main set of these workouts. To make any expression would require too much effort when all is needed to keep up with the others.

I use every trick in the book to hang on. I take off behind the swimmer ahead of me in the pace line before I am supposed to and try to take a free ride down the first length, drafting off him, trying not to touch his feet so he knows I am not only cheating but using his effort to do so. I come into the turn almost into the other side of the lane, trying to cut the corner to save miliinches of yardage. At each rest point, I hang onto the lane line or the side of the pool without moving at all, trying to conserve my energy for the next battle to hang on. In some sets, I arrive at the end of one part of the set no sooner than I see the swimmer ahead already pushing off for the next part. My face must look like that basketball player's. I think you call it sh-tfaced, at least in the sport of drinking alcohol or doing drugs.

A little competitive feeling kicks in. Either I get a brief minute to think of being proud I am hanging in, before I realize I that now I am fading back because I spent a second thinking, or I am nastily proud because the guy behind or ahead of me dropped out or put on flippers to hang on, or I see the people in the second lane and think, "Suckers, can't keep up with our lane, can you?" (Nice guy?) I get energy from that competitive feeling, against others. Or I get energy and freedom from the lap count by stealing a few looks under water at the girls, or rather, women in my or the next lane. So, when Don, says I look smooth, I feel like replying, "You mean her swim suit looks smooth where it...." But I cannot talk, or look at Don, just try to hang, doing the thing I have hated since childhood swim class, putting my face back in the hostile environment, the wet, silent, cold, scary water.

Water. When my dog first saw it, he hesitated for about fifteen minutes, before touching the lake edge with his paw. He didn't know what it was, solid or what. If you are walking around on land, why would you want to go into the water. Fish were given that as their sad lot in life, not we mammals.

The only reason I do it, the only reason I do anything other than watch TV, is to say I do it.

I hear gurgling noises, my arms start to hurt, my nose has chlorine in it, I can't see very well, if I don't concentrate on staying afloat, I will sink and die in the water's embrace. It is over my head. Even on the shallow end, I remember, people can drown in their tubs.

But it is the pain in my arms and back that takes over. I am running out of strength. Coaches forget the issue of strength. When you have used up your available strength, no amount of philosophy or sports fuel intake will change that reality. I can't lift a house, even if a coach suggests I can do it or even if I eat a pile of energy bars advertised in the triathlon magazine.

That is when form takes over. I have realized that, at this age, I can try to use the least amount of strength to go the furthest distance and disguise the fact that I have less strength than my lane mates. Don is right that I look smooth. I roll, my butt sticks up, my front arm stays out in front until my other arm is catching, I am all in line. Crisis

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makes for opportunity, a psychologist's wall poster says, I once noticed in an office while strictly visiting. My strength being limited, I have one other answer to hang on, swim efficiently.

Since I recently realized this, though I read it years ago, just like I read years ago that one should be a follow the golden rule but haven't yet got it, I have thought about applying the idea of least effort it to running and biking. I have always believed that, for running, you have to train on the track fast, and for biking it is "piles of miles," but now I try to limit the amount of strength I am applying to each stride or stroke while going the same speed. It is just a mental attitude of hiding my limits while flowing along, by making every muscle twitch count for forward motion. I try to run a race like falling through a hole, just let me go with little effort.

Now, after one last look at the women's swim attire, it is time for the victory shower. I can brag to myself all night and half the next day that I did a swim workout, as if I were a college swimmer. It is, until next week, okay that my arms hurt, my skin itches, my eyes see double, I can't hear through the water stuck in my ears, my mind has suffered another blow of self-doubt, stress, confusion and forcing itself to go where no man should. I deserve a gin and tonic. If I make the drink, I do so and take a sip with the least effort possible.



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