

TriCentric

E-TIP

5 TRIATHLON MISTAKES TO AVOID



Dear Katie,

As a coach and athlete, I'm faced with the same need to overcome my limiters as everyone else. It's important to learn from mistakes in order to progress towards goals, prevent injury and continue to enjoy a healthy and active lifestyle.

In this E-Tip, I'll cover 5 common mistakes that keep us from reaching our potential in triathlon and in some cases... do more harm than good. At TriCentric we have a saying... a motto... "*Forward Progress*"... everything you do should move you forward... in life and sport.

Cheers,

Brandon Heflin
TriCentric Training

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5 Mistakes

5 common mistakes of triathletes

1. Train as a single sport athlete: You are a triathlete, train like one! Too often I see triathletes make the mistake of training their swim like a swimmer with endless laps of masters wall tag, cycling like they are going to sprint for a prim in a crit and running like they are US Olympic marathon hopefuls. Triathlon is not 3 sports in 1... its one sport with multiple skill sets. Keep this in mind and plan your training to support your goals... don't follow your plan into a brick wall.

2. Poor diet: I hear this too often... *"You're a triathlete so you can eat whatever you want since you burn all of those calories"*. This is a huge myth! If you put garbage into your body you shouldn't expect gains in your body composition, performance and recovery. Most of us have a huge opportunity to make improvements with our daily nutrition habits that will yield a positive result on race day. Remember... a drop in body fat is a gain in VO2 max... that's better than free speed... it actually costs less.

3. Attention to skills and details: Volume, volume, volume!!! Too many athletes do what they want to do or can do and not what they should do in the pursuit of their goals. Swimming countless laps without improving technique, slogging out out miles of running without learning how to improve running mechanics and cycling at one or two training zones... you have a huge opportunity to get faster with less time while reducing injury potential and improving efficiency. A few more examples where we can improve:

- Transition skills
- Bike maintenance (learn how to solve problems for race day)
- Use equipment that suits the course and your skill set (wheels, helmets, hydration systems, etc...)

4. Train your plan: Often training follows the path of your strongest training partner or groups that you may train with. Partners and groups are a great resource and enjoyment to have... however, it's important to train your own program if you expect to accomplish your goals. I've seen many, many athletes wonder what happened on race day using the logic that they were able to keep some fast guy's wheel all year... again... this can be good sometimes but not all... train your plan and focus on your needs.

5. Mental skills: This is a larger area of neglect than most would assume. It goes deeper than simply learning how to execute a race... it's developing the mental skill and discipline to be your best. This means losing fitness at times so that when it is time to focus again you have the physical and mental freshness to concentrate on the target. Another mental skill is the language and thought process an athlete takes on... this can produce a very negative self image and lack of true confidence in your training and racing. Develop your mind as well as your skill and fitness... it will pay off for you!

This is not a complete list nor does it fully cover everything... it is, however a good place to start thinking about your approach to training, racing and living a healthy and balanced triathlon lifestyle.

About TriCentric Training

TriCentric Training is a Pasadena, California based coaching company specializing in triathlon, cycling, running and bike fit.

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