

# TriCentric

E-TIP

RACE DAY PERFORMANCE



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Dear Katie,

Performing at your best on race day is an elusive piece of the puzzle for many athletes trying to connect the dots between training and racing. Here are a few tips to help make those connections and race at your best.

Cheers,

~B

Brandon Heflin  
TriCentric Training

## Tips for Race Day Performance

Race day and the race itself has a lot of moving parts... friction and chaos that's in your best interest to figure out and minimize to the best of your ability before race day arrives. It can be difficult to summarize such complexities to a large audience of all ability levels but we have done just that ;-). Obviously this is a topic that has very individual implications so think of the points below as a template for success and starting point.

### During Training:

- **Study the race course:** This includes the swim details such as average water temps and conditions, bike profile, route, technical sections, run profile, average annual air temperature and humidity... everything you can learn to aid in your preparations.
- **Train for the race course:** If you know the course than you can build a training program that will prepare you properly for any unique challenges and address areas you stand to improve.

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### Race week/day before race:

- **Rest!!!:** Race week is not the time to gain fitness or speed... you must rest in order to perform at your best. Read my previous taper e-tip for more guidance... get your sleep and rest up.
- **Meals and Hydration:** Eat foods you are used to and avoid over-eating. Race week is not the time to introduce new foods and explore all the restaurants when traveling. Stick to what has worked and be sure to hydrate well.
- **Check you equipment:** Check bike for tune, tighten bolts, clean and lube chain, make sure all of your race day equipment is ready to go on race day. A little organization goes a long way.
- **Pack for the race:** start this early and lay everything out... check with a list, check it again and then pack it up and forget it... diligence with this task adds peace of mind come race day.
- **Stay off your feet:** wear good shoes and stay off you feet when possible...

### Race Morning:

- **Breakfast & nerves:** Don't try new things on race day... eat your normal breakfast and plan to have race day nerves. This means you may not have a normal appetite so plan accordingly and bring something familiar (bagel, sports bar, etc...) to nibble on through your morning.
- **Arrive early to race:** know the parking situation and arrive early. If transition opens at 5am, arrive at 4:45 and plan on a line to park. Set up early and get to the bathrooms early. Don't be "that guy" who shows up late and can't find a spot in transition!
- **Warm up:** A warm up will improve performance by as much as 30%!!! that's huge! Don't be a slave to a rigid warm up routine as many times you can't swim or bike before your race. There are many options for warming up... stretch cords, a jog with a few pick ups, etc...

### Race:

- **Course & Rules:** Know the course and the rules... stick to both. The rules apply to EVERYONE and they ensure safety and fairness to everyone in the race no matter how fast or slow the athlete.
- **Self-Seed:** Know your strengths and weakness and seed yourself accordingly in the swim. start your swim in a way that allows you to focus on your race... for some that means mixing it up at the front and for others it means holding back and settling into your race behind the pack.
- **Pacing:** If you want to go fast... you have to start slow! I see this at every race I go to... bolt out of transition like you stole something. If you can't maintain and increase your current pace/intensity for the duration than there's a good chance you are going to fast. There is no such thing a fast swim and bike that yields a slow run in this sport... that's just bad pacing.
- **Transitions:** Keep it simple. Only set up what you need and don't

start your day by setting up a "survival towel" with every piece of contingency equipment imaginable. Everything you do in transition should be controlled and deliberate... that's how you transition fast and start each let in the right frame of mind... *"under control"*

- **Tactical decisions:** Make decisions that are tactically advantageous to your performance. Avoid pushing super hard in your most aero position in a tailwind, drafting a swimmer that is too fast, recklessly bombing down descents and any thing else that is wasting energy. Everything you do should be calculated and set you up for successful race... NOT a fast split!
- **Form/Technique:** This is an undervalued skill. To put it in very simple terms... your ability to maintain best form/technique will determine the quality and success of your race performance. It's that simple... lose your swim stroke and you will use more energy while slowing down, lose your cycling economy and your will pay for it somewhere, start too fast and don't pay attention to your run form and you will go slower. Race day is about the details and decisions you make with your fitness, skill and talent.

*\*\*\*This is not intended to be a complete list nor does it include everything you need to know for race day. It is intended to be a snapshot of common ingredients for success.*

## About TriCentric Training

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

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