

# GETTING STARTED

## **Just getting started with your first Tri? Here are the very basics...**

Triathlon is three events within one race, and the traditional order is swimming first, biking second, and running last. This is the order that the Gold Nugget follows.

The transition from swim to bike is called "T1" and the transition from bike to run is called "T2." Our "T2" will be located at the end of the bike leg. You can leave items needed at "T2" during bike drop off (more information will be included in pre-race e-newsletters). An important thing to know is that "the clock" starts (for you) when you start swimming, and it stops when you cross the finish line. Both transitions count towards your total time. Some women try to do these transitions as fast as possible, while some like to take their time. It's totally up to you. See the FAQ's for more info on T1 and use of the pool locker rooms during your race.

In order to understand the flow of "T1" – a.k.a. how you get from being in the pool to being on your bike – we recommend reading the pre-race e-newsletters very carefully when you receive them closer to the race (if you are registered). They contain very detailed information regarding transitions. We also recommend consulting the USAT rules because some of the rationale for our rules and policies stem from those.

## **How do I start training for a triathlon if I'm not all that athletic right now?**

If you're starting your training in the winter, you'll probably be doing a lot of training indoors. A good mix of biking, running, and swimming is a good idea, of course. You may also want to do some workouts that include two of these things in the same workout. You may also want to do some longer workouts that last around the same amount of time that you expect the full triathlon to take you, so that you can get your body used to exercising for that length of time. Any exercise you do between now and the race will improve your aerobic capacity, your circulation, and the efficiency of your heart, and is therefore all useful. Mix it up a little, as in alternating days of running and biking, so as to minimize your risk of injury. Running in particular is a sport that, when done improperly, can cause over-use injuries fairly easily.

Of all the legs of the triathlon, many women find the swim the most daunting. We highly recommend that you practice swimming at least 500 yards in a workout (that's 10 laps) if not more, so that you can be comfortable with that distance. If your crawl is not efficient enough to swim 500 yards, practice sidestroke or backstroke as well. Many women swim strokes other than freestyle in the GNT! **KNOW YOUR APPROXIMATE 500 YARD SWIM TIME.**

Recruit a friend or relative! Training with a buddy is more fun, and many people find they have better luck sticking to a plan if they have someone to do it with.

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## **What other kinds of things do I need to do to be prepared for race day?**

Familiarize yourself with the course, if you can, so that you know what to expect. This doesn't mean you have to memorize it, or that you will be responsible for knowing exactly where to go – the course will be well-marked, with lots of volunteers to make sure you stay on track. It's just helpful, psychologically, to have an idea where hills are, where the half-way points are, etc.

If you think you might want additional food or sports drink with you on the course make sure that you have tried consuming it during a workout before race day. You don't want to experience stomach/intestinal pain during your race from using a food that you didn't know would not agree with you! Not everyone's stomachs can handle foods such as Gu, Clif Shots, PowerBars, etc. during intense exercise so you should do your experimenting before the race.

Get your bike checked and/or tuned up. Make sure that your brakes, shifters, tires, etc. are all in good working order. You don't want any surprises of that nature out on the bike course!

Inspect your swim gear to make sure it's in good condition, and bring two of a few things to the race: swim cap, and goggles. Caps and goggle straps can tear suddenly, so you want some spares. See the FAQ's for more information on the swim portion of the event including tips for starting your swim and the ins and outs of circle swimming.

Pack a bag of clothes to change into after your race, and stuff to shower up. There will be locker rooms available after the race in the gym building. It never hurts to bring some snacks as well for after your race.