



RUNNING

TIPS

So, you've made it through the swim and have navigated the bike portion of the triathlon. Next comes the final leg: the run. Since many athletes come to a triathlon with a running background, their assumption is it should be the easiest. Sometimes this is true, sometimes not. It really depends on how well the athlete has paced him or herself throughout the other portions of the event that determines run success. The distance of the event also comes into play. The run effort will be different for a sprint, in comparison to an Ironman, and should be planned as such. Triathletes only have so many matches to burn in their fitness matchbook. Use them wisely throughout your race to have a few left to burn during the run.

The triathlon run requires several things in preparation for your main race.

- 1.** Most important is the “brick” transition run. This is a run immediately following a hard bike effort. Your legs and feet will feel like they have bricks attached for the first portion. Make sure to practice this prior to your main event. If you haven't done so, you will be in for an unpleasant surprise come race day. You only need one of these workouts per week.
- 2.** Establish your baselines early in your season training program. You need to know where you start to see improvements. This can be any repeatable distance and course that is comparable to your race distance. Pick a medium to monitor your effort—whether it's perceived effort (PRE), heart rate or pace. Record your numbers for monthly validation.
- 3.** Work on leg turnover. Generally 90 footstrikes per minute/leg is ideal for a triathlon. Quicker leg turnover equals faster runs. Do a count during your training runs to see how you fare.
- 4.** Hills build strength. Track work builds speed. Elite-level runners incorporate both into their training at the proper times. Progression tempo runs (continual increases of speed) are a critical workout per week and should be incorporated no matter what your starting level.
- 5.** Biomechanics. Don't discount good form. This will minimize injuries and give you more speed for the same effort. A few seconds/mile may be all you need to earn you a position on the podium or an age-group award. Using modern technologies, a good coach will be able to tape you and review it on screen to show you the proper technique and monitor your progress. For those without a coach, check out your form in a mirror while on the treadmill or as you run past a storefront. Good form will have you on the mid to forefront of your foot, not your heels.

All of this will add up to faster run splits. Great luck in your triathlon running! **OA**