



## newsletter

### Triathlon as a team sport...A Letter from the President

After being forced to retire from a career in gymnastics and looking for a new sport with variety, I was surprised to find that triathlon was unique from many individual sports. The mood at a race was so different than at your typical 10K or marathon. People are always supportive of each other, and even if when competitive, it's still social. I have yet to be on a bike ride or race whereupon assistance wasn't offered by other racers to a person down on the side of the road (OK so trying to find a 650cm tire at Danskin was the exception... maybe leaving my tire on the driveway doesn't count as "man down".) In this sport, we constantly count on each other to train, motivate, download all that tri-geek knowledge, hitch a ride to a race, and share the post-workout meal. It really is a team effort.

This season I've tried a couple of official team races. With the help of team Sco MoYo I could graduate from the Olympic Wildflower, check out the intimidating long course without

blowing up at the first race of the season and finishing on Saturday!

Hooking up with a team for the Hi-Tec race at Folsom Lake this past weekend I had my first taste of adventure racing. What a blast! An experienced adventure racing teammate saved our team on the special tests and handling the pseudo kayaks, our consistent runner set us on an awesome pace, and when one of us took a serious fall on the last leg of the mountain bike, there was no doubt we wouldn't finish unless as a team. Not to say that the team way is the only way, but trying the team game is a great way to try something new and push your limits.

If you haven't had a tried a team event, there are a lot of choices. Almost every race offers a relay division—usually last to sell out. The upcoming Providian Relay is the ultimate in team running (with that much sleep deprivation, you can't help but bond). GGTC is also organizing two new events, a triathlon training program of Tri



& Give where we'll need tri buddies, new and old and the upcoming Splash n' Dash which contributes to one of the most exciting triathlon events (and with outstanding swag), the Challenged Athletes Foundation race in San Diego.

As always, the team is not just for racing, we encourage you to check out the weekly group workouts, come to a monthly meeting where you can meet up with training teams, find an adventure racing team, create a bike racing team, join the swim team, help out with the volunteer team—the sky's the limit.

Go go (team) GGTC! *Yuko Tsuchiya, President*

### The old Post-race depression...By Jim Taylor, Ph.D.

Post-race depression is natural and usually can't be avoided. Events such as an Ironman or any race that you are highly invested in requires tremendous physical, psychological, and emotional investment. When the event concludes, a letdown is inevitable for several reasons.

First, your body has been performing at a high level in training and then in the race for so long, it needs to take a break. Because it no longer needs to be up, it goes down. In fact, most of the "depression" is physiologically based. The body shuts down for a while so it can rest and rejuvenate. As our thoughts and emotions are fundamentally physiological, this physical decline also expresses itself in "down" thoughts and emotions.

This so-called depression also has a direct psychological and emotional component. For months of training and during the competition, our goals, thoughts, and focus have had a clearly defined purpose and direction. With the race concluded, that purpose is gone and along with it is a short-term loss of a significant part of your self-identity (the part that is, "I am a triathlete."). This lack of direction causes us to ask questions such as, "Who am I?" and "What now?" are common.

An emotional letdown is expected as well. After being on an emotional high-excitement, elation, joy-from the intense training and the race itself, the combination of the physiological down period and psychological loss of purpose



inevitably leads to down emotions such as depression (though rarely clinical), sadness, listlessness, irritability, and a general malaise. These emotions can be mild or quite severe.

The key question is how to deal with this uncomfortable

post-race experience. First, accept that it is a normal and necessary part of training and competition. This period allows you to recovery from the race, much like a rest day after an intense week of training. Also, recognize that the feelings will pass in time.

You shouldn't resist the down period by finding a new goal and beginning to train again. If you do, you will likely prolong the depression and you are more likely to get sick because your immune system functioning is down too. Allow yourself to experience and pass through the depression. Ensure that you get extra rest, eat healthy, and try not to tax yourself too much. This "indulgence" will allow your mind and body to rejuvenate more quickly and return to your usual high-energy self.

Because you are not "feeding" your physical self-identity, turn your attention to another important part of your self that you find nourishing, perhaps social or creative activities. This alternative "nutrition" will provide you with other meaningful sources of validation that will counteract your malaise and will help you to continue to feel good about yourself and to experience positive emotions.

Importantly, enjoy not having a goal or direction. Revel in doing little; not having to get up for those early morning masters' swims, having weekends free, going to sleep after 9 pm, eating a big, fat, juicy burger, curly fries, and an Oreo shake. You have earned it!

Do things that you enjoy simply for the experience of them. Try being a "human being" for a while instead of a "human doing." The reconnection with who you are rather than what you do is an essential part of gaining the most joy out of the triathlon (or other sport) experience and ensures that, when you do return to training, you continue to participate for positive, healthy, and life-enriching reasons, and you are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready to master the challenges of the new goals you have set for yourself.

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"There's nobody you'd rather beat than your good friend."

Charles Barkley, about playing against Michael Jordan, 1993.

## Ask Jim...



There are steps that you can take to mitigate back pain but I don't believe there is a simple way to fix this problem. Bicycling requires you to ride bent over the top tube while keeping your back straight. Riding hunched over can make for a seriously sore

back. This is a very common problem for beginning cyclists. Their bodies just aren't ready to assume an aero position. This problem may even be greater for triathletes because of their need to use aerobars for extended periods of time.

I recommend a five-step approach to alleviating this discomfort. First, make sure you are fit properly on your bicycle. Go see a professional. They will take everything into consideration. It is worth the expense. An adjustment as small as a centimeter can be the difference between improved performance and injury.

Second, improve your cycling technique. A sore back can easily result from pushing gears that are too hard for you or overemphasizing one side of your body. Have an experienced cycling or triathlon coach evaluate your technique. Improving your spin and/or your balance can go a long way in maintaining a healthy back.

I seem to keep having lower back pain on the bike, any solutions for this?

Next is to improve your posture through increased flexibility. Stretching will reduce the inflammation simply because there will not be as much tension on the muscles and their attachments. I recommend stretching all your muscles, not selecting the few that may target your lower back. But in the essence of time I suggest targeting your lower back, hamstrings and hip flexors. I am a HUGE supporter of Active-Isolated Stretching pioneered by Aaron Mattes and widely popularized by Jim and Phil Wharton. Both have published excellent books describing this technique. It is a stretching technique that we've taught to well over 1000 Club One members in a performance-training program called Performance Max. If you have questions on this stretching method direct them to my email and I will elaborate further.

Fourth is to strengthen your core muscles. This means your abdominals and lower back. I don't recommend an inordinate amount of strengthening of these muscles as this may reduce their elasticity and inhibit your breathing capacity. There have been more innovative core-strengthening exercises developed over the last few years than you can imagine. Qualified personal trainers can help in this regard.

Last is therapy. Don't underemphasize the necessity of continued therapy to maintain peak

performance and repair physical injury. Massage, chiropractic adjustment, ice and heat are all essential. There should be a specific routine of therapy that you take responsibility to perform. It's most important that you continue to do it when you're healthy. If you're in a rhythm of receiving a massage every week, visiting the chiropractor once a month, treating yourself with ice and taking a Jacuzzi on Wednesdays, and your only experiencing a minimum of back pain, means your therapy routine is helping. The above routine is mine. It takes a time and money but it means I stay healthy and my training and racing are not interrupted.

Medication, anti-inflammatory, muscle relaxants may be required at times but don't make them a shortcut. Deal with the problem directly.

Good nutrition, proper antioxidant packages and particularly proper hydration will all have some effect on the elasticity and continued repair of your muscles and yield a positive result.

Understand that this process may take time. Be patient and be thorough. If you don't feel improvement, or if the pain becomes acute, you need to see a physician immediately.



By Jim Karanas

## The journey of an Ironman...By Mark "XBigMan" Davis

After two failed Ironman attempts and the tragedy at Ironman Utah, the third time was the charm. I did it!

How do I feel right now? I feel a little bit like Rocky Balboa must have felt after fighting Apollo Creed. Mentally I feel proud and alive; physically I am a little sore. The Rocky movie had a big influence in my life as I began the transition from "Fatman" when I was staring at "368" on the scale to "Ironman" in 1991. I would watch Rocky while I pedaled my Lifecycle. I never dreamed that my life would be like the movie.

The only goal I ever had in an Ironman race was to finish 140.6-miles. I just wanted to "go the distance."

I was apprehensive, thinking about the shorter cutoff time, when I looked up and was greeted with a smile from a bunch of triathletes from Ironman Utah. "We felt really bad that you didn't get your chance to finish an Ironman at Utah. We're all going to make sure we help you finish." The man's name was Troy and I was really touched. With support like this how could I lose?

Saturday 7:10 am-The Russian River was much smoother than Utah Lake. I couldn't help but think about how the water punched me around at Utah. Now I was doing the punching. I had hoped to be out of the water by 8:50 am, but arrived at 8:38 am.

Like Rocky I managed to knock down my opponent in the first round. I couldn't get cocky; I still had many more rounds to go.

I felt very strong as I finished the first 56-mile loop of the bike, riding exactly as I had hoped and planned. 20 miles later, I started slowing down and feeling terrible. I was alone and lonely, what was I going to do? I swallowed some Gu and water and told myself I could get to mile 80. When I arrived at mile 80, I swallowed more Gu, drank some water and told myself I could get there I could get to mile 85. I kept this routine up until the bike finish.

I was now in uncharted territory as I began to run the marathon. The longest I had ever run was 18 miles. I had planned on a lot of walking, but with the shorter cutoff time looming on the horizon, I needed to run. I heard a lot of shouts from teammates and the Utah triathletes of "Way to go Mark!" I started to understand the phrase "the loneliness of the long distance runner."

I heard another "Hey X-BigMan," turned around and saw the answer to my prayers. It was my friend Duane Franks, the man who gave me my first job as a Personal Fitness Trainer and introduced me to the sport of triathlon. Duane had come to Vineman to bicycle alongside me and support me during the marathon. Duane picked up food for me, kept me company and coached me on stride and pace. I couldn't believe how good I felt. The sun went down

and a full moon appeared as we were making our way through the course in total darkness. I almost twisted my ankle in potholes; a volunteer gave me a flashlight. I pointed the light at the ground, hoping to see the next mile marker. I felt no different after mile 18 and grew more confident. At mile 23 my quads felt like they would explode when I finally saw the mile 25 marker. The cutoff was getting close, Duane told me, "Mark, you have no margin for error. You have to take it all the way in." It was gut check time. This was what an Ironman comes down to. How bad did I want it?

I could now see lights and hear the spectators. I was 200 yards from the finish and Duane told me, "Mark, you're going to be an Ironman." He slipped away to let me have my moment at the finish line. My chest hit the tape and I was an Ironman. There is one big difference between my story and Rocky's. At the end of the fight, Apollo says: "There ain't gonna be no rematch." Rocky replies: "I don't want one." I am already planning my next Ironman rematch as I savor my victory this past weekend. I have made a long journey from where I started, but I have further to go and I want more.

*I would like to thank my fellow GGTC'ers for their support and encouragement. And huge thanks to Coach Michael McCormack and Duane Franks-I could not have done it without you. To Victory!*

## Creating an inner desire...By JoAnn Dahlkoetter, Ph.D.

(excerpts from her book *Your Performing Edge*).

Look around you, find your passion, see what makes you whole.

To excel as a triathlete you must be hungry - hungry for success, for results - hungry simply to become the best athlete you can be. *It starts with a dream, but somehow you must be inspired, or you will never be able to reach your goal.* We often read about athletes overcoming physical disabilities. Lance Armstrong survived testicular cancer and won the Tour de France three times. Marla Runyan ran in the 1500 meters of the 2000 Olympics while being legally blind. It is out of these challenges that athletes develop a fierce, burning desire to succeed. They need to prove to themselves that they can achieve their goals. Through these kinds of examples we can begin to understand that *desire is sometimes more important than even talent or a healthy body.*

*The movie "Prefontaine" depicts the life of a running legend who had one leg shorter than the other, and did not necessarily have "the perfect runner's body". Yet from a very early age he developed an insatiable love for running. Through his drive and determination Steve Prefontaine went on to break the American record in every distance from 2,000 - 10,000 meters, a feat never attained by any other American man.*

Without a true love for your sport and a burning desire to be the best you can be, you will never be able to push yourself to do what has to be done. It will be too easy to skip a workout now and then. A coach or parent can give you support and guidance, but you have to supply the rest. Only you can push yourself when you're tired, or make yourself work out when distractions get in the way. After Steve Prefontaine had reached the height of his running career, he lost to Lasse Viren in the Olympic 5,000 meters in Munich. The loss led him to consider quitting the sport. His coach Bill Bowerman told him, *"If you're gonna run, be at the track and I'll give you the workouts; or if your gonna stop running, then do that. You decide. I can't coach desire."*

So the drive must come from within, regardless of whether you're a novice, a serious athlete, or competing at the elite level. *The good news is that building and maintaining a high level of self-motivation is a learned skill that anyone can acquire. Motivation is energy, and that sense of self-directedness is one of the most powerful sources of energy available to an athlete.* From internal motivation you gain the willingness to persevere with your training, to endure discomfort and stress, and to make sacrifices with your time and energy as you move closer toward realizing your goal.

### Profile of the Highly Motivated Triathlete

What are the key characteristics of well-motivated athletes? Through my extensive work with numerous athletes over several years, I have developed a constellation of traits that defines the champion's mentality. Elite athletes do not possess superhuman powers or extraordinary qualifications limited to a selected few. The characteristics that make a champion can be attained and developed by anyone who wants to excel in a sport.

#### • **Enthusiasm and Desire - Love for Your Sport:**

Top athletes have a hunger, a fire inside which fuels their passion to achieve an important goal, regardless of their level of talent or ability. To accomplish anything of value in life you need to begin with some kind of vision or dream. The more clearly you can see that picture in your mind, the more likely it is to become reality. Wherever you place your attention, your energy will follow.

• **Courage to Succeed:** Once an athlete has the desire, he or she needs to back it up with courage - the incentive to make any dream you dare to dream become reality. It takes courage to sacrifice, to work out when you're tired, to seek out tough competition when you know you'll probably lose. It takes courage to stick to your game plan and the relentless pursuit of your goal when you encounter obstacles. It takes courage to push yourself to places that you have never been before - physically or mentally. It takes courage to test your limits, and to break through barriers.

• **Internal motivation and self-direction:** Champion athletes decide early on that they are training and competing for themselves, not for their parents, their coaches, or for the medals. Direction and drive need to come from within. The goals must be ones that you have chosen because that's exactly what you want to be doing. Ask yourself, what keeps you running? Who are you doing it for?

• **Commitment to Excellence:** How good do you want to be? Elite athletes know that to excel at their sport, they must decide to make it a priority in their life. They make an honest effort each day to be the best at what they do. At some point you must say, I want to be really good at this; I want this to work. To notice significant growth you must live this commitment and regularly stretch what you perceive to be your current limits.

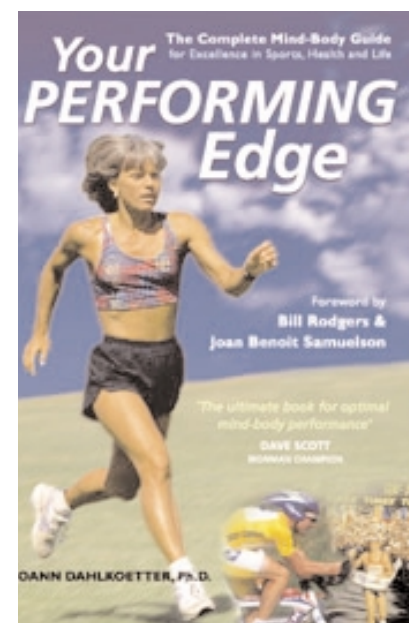
• **Discipline, Consistency, Organization:** Winning athletes know how to self-energize and work hard on a daily basis. Because they love what they do it is easier for them to maintain consistency in training and in competing. Regardless of personal problems, fatigue, or difficult circumstances, they can generate the optimal amount of excitement and energy to do their best.

• **Being focused and yet relaxed:** Champions have the ability to maintain concentration for long periods of time. They can tune in what's critical to their performance and tune out what's not. They can easily let go of distractions and take control of their attention.

• **Ability to handle adversity:** Top athletes know how to deal with difficult situations. Adversity builds character. When elite athletes know the odds are against them they embrace the chance to explore the outer limits of their potential. Rather than avoiding pressure they feel challenged by it. They are calm and relaxed under fire. Setbacks become an opportunity for learning; they open the way for deep personal growth.

Triathlons can become a means to personal growth and enjoyment of the pursuit of your goals. Try incorporating the profile above into your mental preparation, and you can learn to live more fully, train more healthfully, and feel exactly the way you want to feel.

*JoAnn Dahlkoetter, Ph.D., best-selling author of YOUR PERFORMING EDGE, is an internationally recognized sports psychologist, past winner of the San Francisco Marathon and 2nd in the Hawaii Ironman Triathlon. For a FREE NEWSLETTER with valuable TRAINING TIPS and articles and autographed book, visit [www.YourPerformingEdge.com](http://www.YourPerformingEdge.com). Dr. Dahlkoetter provides coaching by phone for optimal mind-body performance. Email: [joann@YourPerformingEdge.com](mailto:joann@YourPerformingEdge.com). or call 650- 654-5500.*



" The quicker you get there, the shorter the pain." - James Waddington



## It's all fun...social

So for those of you that have recently joined-monthly meetings are generally held the 1st Monday of every month-(National Holidays usually push them back a week). Every month you are guaranteed a social gathering to share stories, and relax with your team mates. In August we had Iron-woman Wendy Ingraham-who has placed in the top 10 of every Ironman event she has entered, recently coming in 2nd at IM Japan.

**At our September 9th** meeting we'll have another Ironman Triathlete JULIE MOSS. Julie has several milestones in her career, most notably being the individual responsible for bringing the sport of Ironman into America's living room. In February of 1982 while competing at the Ironman World championships in Kona, and leading the woman's race when 440 yards from the finish line she collapsed. Many of us watched as she attempted to regain her balance, only to continue to fall to the ground, crawling on her hands and knees to the finish. Her determination and competitive spirit changed the way many viewed (women in) sports forever. You don't want to miss it! Meeting starts promptly at 7pm Ft. Mason Room C230.

**SF. Grand Prix:** Come on down to the Embarcadero, from 9am-3pm Sept. 15th and bring your family and friends to watch the SF. Grand Prix! Where you can see Lance Armstrong, George Hincappie, and GGTC fan ROBIN WILLIAMS (hopefully he'll be wearing his GGTC bike jersey that friend Wendy Ingraham got him as a birthday present after she was a guest at our Aug. Meeting!)

**BBQ After:** GGTC will have a tent at the festival grounds, so bring a friend fill out a volunteer sign up sheet to be a Course Marshall, and come by the tent to purchase GGTC items and partake in our member BBQ!

**Volunteers needed-for details email tamra.engle@ggtc.org!**



## The updates...by Mark, Fernando, Walter and Brent

**Swim-** Our club is one of the oldest and largest in the country. But Golden Gate Triathlon Club had yet to stage its own race. Until now. On Saturday, September 7th, 50 of our members will take part in the first Splash and Dash, a swim/ run duathlon in and around Aquatic Park. Prizes from the race will send two members to the San Diego Challenge triathlon. And proceeds will send \$1,000 to the Challenged Athletes Foundation. I urge you to sign up for any remaining spots, come watch or volunteer to help out.

GGTC is also lucky to have a new coaching resource in Marc Evans. A former head coach to USA Triathlon's World Championship teams, Marc is now based in Menlo Park, at the Riekes Center for Human Enhancement. For swimmers, Marc offers flume sessions in one of the best flumes outside the US Olympic Committee facility in Colorado Springs. An hour spent with Marc is a great investment for swimmers of all abilities, with Marc only six feet away, you'll receive instant feedback. Check out the swim and coaching sections of the ggtc.org site for more info.

**Bike-** The bike program has regular bike rides every Saturday morning. Usually we do one short ride between 20 and 40 miles) for the beginners and one long ride between 50 and 70 miles to advanced rides. The rides are mainly in Marin county, but also in East bay and Napa/Sonoma.

- **FREE "Bike Orientation Clinic"** and "Bike Maintenance Clinic"-Sunday Sept. 8th - 12:00 noon. At Phil Casanta's-1346 Merced Richmond, Ca 94804. Clinic will cover the proper way to remove and re-install both wheels and hands on changing of flat tires. Participants should wear clothes they don't mind getting a little dirty. You may bring your bike but it is not necessary, wheels and

tire changing tools will be supplied for all participants. Class is limited to 35 and must register at [www.hypercatracing.com](http://www.hypercatracing.com) for a confirmed slot. Day of registration will only be available if class does not fill.

- Pre-race bike rides on courses such as Alcatraz, Wildflower, Vineman, have been popular, to help athletes get an advantage by knowing the courses-watch the list for details.

- **Thanks:** I want to thanks all the members who stepped up to lead bike rides. You are the soul of the bike program and your help is deeply appreciated. Want to lead a ride? Email: [fernando.chilvarguer@ggtc.org](mailto:fernando.chilvarguer@ggtc.org)



**Run-** GGTC offers a variety of run programs for the beginner or experienced triathlete. Set in a friendly and open atmosphere, triathletes can meet new or old friends and enjoy the benefits of group workouts. Coached track workouts are held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays 7PM, March through November. Two-time Ironman Canada winner and long-time successful triathlon coach Michael McCormack is the Tuesday night coach. Team USA Long Course World Championships triathlete and seasoned veteran age group triathlete and Team Diabetes marathon team coach, Brandon Tomlinson coaches on Wednesdays. Both offer a variety of workouts designed to help the triathlete or runner improve their overall fitness and help meet his/her run goals for the season. Also, trail runs varying in distance and locations are held on Sundays 11 A.M. Each month, Danny Dreyer, nationally ranked Masters Ultra-marathoner with 30+ years of running experience, and founder of Chi-Running offers a coached trail run. He helps with running form, injury prevention and how to conserve energy with various techniques.

**Look out for new GGTC clinics and workshops @ [www.ggtc.org](http://www.ggtc.org)!**

**Monday, September 9, 7-9 pm (Room C230 in Fort Mason)  
Welcome pro triathlete and Ironman legend Julie Moss!**

### GGTC BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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