



TRIGULFCOAST
MULTISPORT ATHLETES

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September, 25 2013

Dear Evan,

With the finish of the 2013 Mere Mortals season, the TGC leadership would like to thank the membership for their participation and ongoing support of the club and the greater-Pensacola multisport community.

With SRI Tri right around the corner please remember to encourage your family and friends to come out to the event on 10/05/13 so as to help support the many TGC members participating in this event. In an effort to leverage the energy of SRI Tri, TGC will be directing the Sea Turtle Triathlon this year (10/06/13) – TGC needs volunteers for this event, so please follow the links in this newsletter so as to register to lend a hand that morning.

Moving into November, there are a number of TGC members heading to Ironman Florida (11/02/13). This might offer for a great day-trip opportunity for those athletes considering participating in such an event in the future. Make a point to cheer for the TGC colors that day!

But, with the off-season coming soon, TGC is not planning on resting too much. Please stay tuned for group ride opportunities as well as efforts at a TGC presence at the many great road races in our area (Pensacola Marathon, Pensacola Beach Run, Double Bridge Run, etc...).

Finally, please take a moment to read through the additional columns in this issue as contributed by Erika Smith (her profile of Dom Risola) and Chris Hicks (his review of Oak Mountain 50k Run). Both provide great insight into your fellow club members.

!!! VOLUNTEERS NEEDED !!!

The day after Santa Rosa Island Tri (10/06/13), the Sea Turtle Triathlon is being directed by TGC and is in need of more volunteers. Please consider sharing a portion of your Sunday morning with these inspiring, young athletes.

Volunteers must register:
[CLICK HERE](#)

TGC END-OF-SEASON SOCIAL

DATE: 10/24/13 (Thursday)

TIME: 5:30pm

LOCATION: 5Eleven Palafox

WHO:

ADULT members and their respective guests only (i.e. get a sitter for the kids for the night please). Please limit guests to include spouses and/or significant others.

FOOD: Catered by Nancy's Haute Affairs

This event will feature the annual recognition of club sponsors and celebration of the achievements of the club membership.



TEAM MPI TIPS (written by Coach John Murray)

Block Training Through the "Off Season"

For many triathletes the season will be over soon. That is, the race season. Just because we don't have a race looming on the horizon doesn't mean we can't still continue our journey of staying fit and active. Some choose to switch to mountain biking or skiing. Others may sink their teeth into their limiter with plans to be a more rounded triathlete in 2014.

There are many in TriGulfCoast that will choose to focus on a single sport for 6-8 weeks. They will de-

emphasize the other 2 disciplines and seek frequency & consistency as a means of accelerated improvement. Many coaches encourage this plan. We have seen a good number of athletes that have been stuck in a certain place and then catapulted themselves in their performances through a well thought out "off season".



With my heavy involvement with the swim, I love to see triathletes confront their nemesis. Facing dread and their fears they show up regularly at the pool to get their dose of humility and swim coaching. Before you know it they are actually enjoying themselves. Improvements are measured and confidence

is found. Some even appear to be having fun!

I encourage you to block out some weeks in the upcoming months to go after that limiter. Have a plan that includes a focus on technique as well as developing strength and aerobic fitness. With this mindset on tackling the toughest of your three expect good things to happen in next year's

races!



ATHLETE PROFILE: Domenick "Dom" Risola (written by Erika Smith)

It was a challenge issued by a friend that led Dom Risola to his first triathlon, the Bold Eagle Tri, in 2011. With the support of his family, Dom began training shortly after recovering from a football injury that had sidelined him, leading him to "balloon up to 265 pounds." Like so many triathletes, Dom explains that upon completing his first tri, he was "hooked." In just 6 months of training, he not only fell in love with the sport, but lost 65 pounds in the process. Then, he began tackling events of increasingly longer distances, completing both his first half Ironman (Augusta) and his first marathon (Pensacola) in 2012.



It will be no surprise to anyone from our community that SRI Tri is his favorite, although he has "a special place in my heart" for the Grandman and the Alabama Coastal because he placed first in his division at both of these events. Dom cites the Augusta half Ironman as his biggest challenge thus far and jokes that he has a "love/hate relationship with the XTERRA races." No matter where he's racing, Dom enjoys the "camaraderie and competition" inherent in the sport, focusing on having fun and enjoying the social aspect of the tri community while working towards his goals.

When he's not training, Dom enjoys paddle boarding, martial arts (which he relays has helped him a great deal in improving his flexibility), scuba diving, and surfing. He can also be found riding his mountain bike on the trails once per week to add variety to his training schedule. For Dom, a former teacher, giving back to his community is especially important to him. Recently, he and several other inspirational parents at Oriole Beach

Elementary School expanded the school's running club. However, most of all, Dom enjoys spending as much time as possible with his family, particularly supporting his two young sons, Dante and Ty, in their extra-curricular activities.

In fact, Dom's entire family has become involved in the sport of triathlon. His wife, Keena, joined him at SRI Tri last year for her first triathlon. The two formed a family team with their children and competed in the Portofino relay race this past August. Dom's other races this season have included the Sandestin Tri and the Alabama Coastal Tri. He is excited about winding up his season with SRI Tri, and his first Ironman, IM Florida, in November.

Dom is a humble athlete who lives by the motto "I always believe I could do better." He expresses sincere appreciation for his family, explaining that "only through my family's support have I been able to do what I have." I asked Dom to share how he has been able to accomplish so much in such a short period of time and he discloses that he initially focused most on his least favorite/weakest area (the run) because that resulted in the most immediate gains, giving him "a quick return on the time invested." He also explains that during the 2012 Pensacola marathon "mile 21 hit like a ton of bricks and reality slapped me in the face...but knowing that my family was waiting for me at the finish line, and always teaching my kids to never give up, I had to continue to shuffle."



2013 Sea Turtle Triathlon
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**KARBON
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UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

- 10/05/13 Santa Rosa Island Triathlon 7:00am (Pensacola Beach, FL)
- 10/12/13 Destin Triathlon 7:00am (Destin, FL)
- 10/13/13 Run For The Reef 7:30am (Navarre Beach, FL)
- 10/19/13 Hot To Trot Reverse Duathlon 7:00am (Perdido Key, FL)
- 10/26/13 Blackwater Trail Run 7:00am (Munson, FL)

- 11/02/13 Great Pumpkin Run 8:00am (Pensacola, FL)
- 11/02/13 Ironman Florida 7:00am (Panama City Beach, FL)
- 11/09/13 Miles Of Memories 8:00am (Pensacola, FL)
- 11/10/13 Pensacola Marathon 7:00am (Pensacola, FL)

UPCOMING TGC EVENTS

- 10/06/13 Sea Turtle Triathlon 8:00am (Pensacola Beach, FL)
- 10/24/13 2013 End-Of-Season Social 5:30pm (Pensacola, FL)



RACE REPORT: Oak Mountain 50k (written by Chris Hicks)

Two weeks prior to running Oak Mountain I ran the R&R Marathon in New Orleans . Both experiences were great and could not have been more different.

I guess this is a race because they do have an overall first and second male and female, maybe third? And it is a run but that is certainly a relative term.

Pre Race in the morning.

Met with Jay Yanovich (local USAT Referee and accomplished ultra trail runner) and Erika Smith (regular writer for PRA & TGC as well as an accomplished ultra trail runner) at 5:45 to get some last minute advice. After the third or fourth time Jay told me to go very slow in the beginning I figured he knows what he is talking about. He has been here 12X and 6X for Erika. A quick drive out to the start line right in the middle of the park took us to a parking lot with plenty of room and a VERY relaxed atmosphere. Well everyone else. Admittedly I was pretty nervous. A quick and efficient check in for the 150 runners and really that was it. Plenty of space to use the bathroom and time to just chill and drink.

THE START

You only knew the line because of where everyone was kind of mulling around. No wind, some clouds and the temp was around 49. The whole attitude was super friendly and laid back. No time clock and the start line was no more than a bag of flour poured on the ground. At some point someone yelled go or something. I don't remember hearing a gun or horn or anything.

Most everyone took off at about a 12 min pace. With the exception of a few, most of them we saw again within 12 miles or so. The first eight miles are gradual climbs kind of like giant steps. I ran with Jay, Erika and their buds for the first five miles or so and then we started to thin out. Erika and I stuck together for the whole run. She was amazingly helpful.

THE RACE

The name of the game was to conserve your legs and energy. The first eight miles you eventually climb to 1,200 feet. This is just the first of 3 times. It really gets your attention. Not many pines or pine straw. LOTS of oaks, leaves and dirt with embedded rocks. Watching your footing is paramount. And for the first time I was truly happy to be wearing real trail shoes. There were about eight water crossings, four were cement type culverts that did nothing more than get feet wet. The others were rocks and logs and definitely time to move slow and calculating. The only time I fell was at a water crossing. The fall was not bad but having only a hand held water bottle and watching half of it empty when I tried to catch myself was not a good feeling. Next year I will wear some sort of hydration backpack for sure. There were four unmanned water / Gatorade stops. There were four checkpoints. You had to check in at checkpoints and make sure your number was recorded. After that the volunteers were AMAZING! And the food and drink was plenty. While I crammed pb&j quarters into my mouth and washed them down with coke, volunteers were willing to refill backpack bladders and water bottles. They were incredibly supportive and high energy. Checkpoints had Oreos, pb&j, endurolytes, pretzels, m&ms with granola, bananas, oranges, water, Gatorade and coke. The trails were well marked and easy to follow. We ran deep in hollows, past a waterfall, miles of steams and the highest point at 1,260 feet you could see for miles. The wind was howling up there. The temperature never really got more than about 65 and stayed overcast. Bottom line is that although the terrain at times was really hard on the feet, ankles and overall balance, the scenery was beautiful. One thing I learned is running uphill on this type surface takes a tons of energy and is not much faster than walking. We fast walked plenty and saved a bunch of energy. Several of the down hills were the same. Steps of rock and tree roots were all you had. Going fast invited a fall or sprain. So again, we walked / hopped and overall went slow. And even then you could feel this start to take a toll on your thighs. Jay actually warned me of this hours earlier. The last checkpoint at 25 miles felt great. It was the home stretch now and we were topping off our nutrition. There would be one more water stop in four miles. Lots of down hill on mostly dirt. Then throw in a few inclines for good measure. At somewhere I guess around 30 miles I realized I felt so much better than 25 miles at Blackwater. I had conserved my energy and pushed many more calories. Keeping my heart rate down seemed to allow me to eat more checkpoints and use gels in between without any stomach distress. Through 90% of the race or maybe more I ran behind Erika watching her footing. She has plenty of experience and knowing it or not she was teaching me a good bit. That was huge except for the low branch that knocked off my visor. Yep, it left a mark.

THE FINISH

Toward the end we had two guys running right behind me. Single file to the finish line. We saw the parking lots through the woods and then it disappeared again as we wound around another curve. She turns and says "hey what do you have left". WHAT?!?! Really? I spent what I had left 5 miles back. She said "let's run this in". OK... We went this far together no time to stop now. And that was huge. Having someone to run with made it SO much better! She commented the same which made me feel like less of mooch. We came to the finish line almost side to side. And that finish line... Another line on dirt made with a bag of flour. That's it. I don't even remember seeing a clock. Just a guy with a clipboard. And a guy right behind him handing out finisher glasses. There was a huge spread of food. Unfortunately my stomach was not ready for anything that heavy and I had to hit the road for home almost immediately. It was a great day and I will definitely go back next year.

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT: Energy Lab Nutrition



Energy Lab has been proud to support TGC at a few of the club workouts this season. With samples of Execute and Electrosalt available at these workouts hopefully the club membership were able to experiment a bit with their own nutrition plans for their target races and key workouts. TGC members are reminded that the entire line of Energy Lab Nutrition products are now available locally from Running Wild. The staff at Running Wild can educate athletes regarding each products, so make sure to stop by and stock up!



Team MPI

RUNNING WILD

Racing with the Professionals (REALLY!) (written by Evan Malone)

*** This column is one which was part of PRA's monthly newsletter (The Rundown); please consider joining PRA as a way to benefit from this great organization, resource, and community in the triathlon off-season ***

Someone once asked me what it is that I enjoy about the hobbies of triathlon and running. I flipped through many worn-out, hackneyed responses in my mental memo pad and gave some vague response along the lines of "it's a healthy addiction," "I can eat what I want," all my friends do the same thing," "running gives me time to think," "I grew up running and swimming so it just made sense to continue on," "every roadrace has free beer afterwards," etc...

Some many days later I stumbled upon a passage wherein the author made mention of how despite the solo, sometimes boring endeavor(s) we all share (collective "we" and "us" refer to the age-group, recreational runner and/or triathlete), we share them with the professionals who have chosen our hobby as a career. I guess it was his way of diverting his mind in the middle of his long, boring training sessions -- knowing the pros do the same thing.

That resonated with me.

I have since added another layer to that notion with the understand that "we" (again, the age groupers) are what keep road races/triathlons and pretty much the entire industry afloat. In fact, without "us" (you get the idea, the collective of age groupers) many industry developments such as the high-end shoes, the most aerodynamic wheels and helmets, the \$1,200 wetsuits, and the most cutting-edge power meters perhaps would not have been developed and would certainly not be accessible to any of us and likely a very limited amount of the professionals. Taking it a step further, I contend that without us the prize purses at most road races and triathlons where professional compete for the gold (and the green) would be non-existent.

Yes, the professionals need us -- the masses, the consumers of hobby-related products, and the supporters of events.

Without getting too deep, besides the notion of "hey professional triathlete/runner, you are only here because I am," what do we get back? Tons really. We get the opportunity to be the consumer of the many cool new toys and accoutrements, the same ones the pros use. We actually, believe it or not, get to take advantage of cheaper registration fees (I just paid the 'cheap' fee of \$672.50 for IM Florida 2013) as without a pro field there would not be the same level of sponsorship interest so the fees would have to increase in order to offset those losses

(IM Florida would probably be \$1,000).

But, most impressive to me is another, under-appreciated feature of our hobbies -- we get to race **ALONGSIDE** the pros.

Think about it. How many other hobbies out there allow the age-group athlete (or sport-specific equivalent) to share the course, court, or playing field with the pros, the best in the world? Not many. Can a recreational tennis player have their name added to the draw at Wimbledon? Can the middle-aged golfer compete to make the Friday cut at Augusta National? Can the ex-high school quarterback signal for a snap behind a line of three-hundred-pounders in the Superbowl? Can the guy with degenerating knees chase down a fly ball in the outfield of the World Series? Can the car junkie with a completely tricked-out hemi complete for the pole position in Daytona? No on all accounts.

We are extremely blessed in that we have the ability to remit payment, sign a waiver, string together some training plan which fits between work/family/kids and toe the line knowing that on that course, at the exact same time, in those same conditions the pros are out there setting world standards. While we may be getting chewed up and spit out by the conditions of the day, the pros are generally doing the opposite by chewing up the course and spitting at whatever gauntlet Mother Nature throws down.

So, the next time you have the opportunity to participate in an event where "we" are out there with the elites and the pros take some time to appreciate this unique opportunity. This very thing has happened to me many times just this season. And, as I reflect back on a few of my races I smile as I think about the many phenoms I was able to share the course with. This, to me, is something which keeps me coming back -- racing **WITH** the pros.

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