

Palm Springs Triathlon:

The Strategy

The challenging part of a triathlon is in the immediate transition from swim to bike and bike to run, because you are emphasizing different muscle groups and changing your fitness level and economy in that particular sport. The best way to “adapt” the body for the next sport is through “Energy management”. No matter what level of fitness or athletic ability everyone in the race is having to manage his/her own energy output during the race. Typically the swim starts out fast or faster than one is prepared for, due to the adrenaline rush in anticipation of the start of event. The rest of the swim is in our “comfort zone” until the last 100 meters where you try to beat the person next to you or all the people around you that were bumping into you for the past 20 or so minutes. The bike usually starts out fast as everyone is “fishing” for the person in front of them. Throw an imaginary hook and line out onto the shoulder of the person in front of you and “reel” them in. About half-way to three quarters through the bike you start to feel the accumulated fatigue from the swim and bike to that point while thinking about the 10k run you have coming up. To most the “spirit” of the sport and your “commitment” to the race begins. I recommend once you have the transition in site at the end of the bike, “spin down” into a lower gear and loosen the legs up for the run. Coming out of transition from the bike to the run puts most into “uncharted athletic capacity” where your legs are deciding weather they should still be cycling or running. If you have practiced a few combination workouts as described in the program below, then the run will not become one of survival but rather one where you can “build” your pace to the finish and finish strong. Remember there are two athletes in the race: one to COMPETE and one to COMPLETE with both being equal achievements.

The Fuel

Prepare your stomach as well as your muscles. Experiment with eating and drinking during your training sessions, especially “combo” sessions. Find the foods that sustain your blood glucose levels and don’t deviate from this routine on race-day. I recommend oatmeal with honey as a pre-race breakfast or ½ bagel and 16oz of water. American College of sports medicine recommends 6 to 8 oz of fluid every 15 to 20 minutes. So this schedule would start in transition prior to starting the bike or within the first ¼ mile of the bike. A sports drink is recommended in hot and humid conditions and should be alternated with water intake during the 15 to 20 minute cycles. Usually during the run you are limited to what the race organizers provide on the course.

The Training Program

This 12-week schedule, designed by Cyle Sage former USA Triathlon Athlete Development Director and Junior Coach. This program assumes you can swim 500 yards continuous, run 20 minutes continuously and cycle one hour continuously (not necessarily on the same day.) If you can’t, then you’ll need to work up to these levels before starting this program. Split the multi-sport training days into morning and afternoon sessions, except for the “combos” on Sundays, which are done as a “back-to-back” workout to practice the transitions. You’ll need extra discipline to train three sports simultaneously, but this program is designed with the busy work/life schedule in mind. Most days require only about an hour of total training (with Sunday’s effort peaking at around two hours). Monday is a rest day. For a personal program visit ttuniversity.com

Btn means between

Week	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 AM or PM	Swim: 16 x 50yd,done as 4 sets of four 50's. Rest 1 minute btn sets of 4 and 15 sec btn ea 50. Run: 25 min. EZ	Bike: 4 x5 minute intervals, with 100% effort. Take 2 min EZ spin btn each interval warm-up and cool down as needed.	Swim: 3 x 300 broken swims. Rest 2 min btn each 300 Run: Warm-up 12 minutes EZ jog, then 8 interval laps on a track. Sprint straight-aways, jog the curves	Bike: EZ 10 minutes Then 40 min of continuous riding at 80% of maximum effort.	Swim: Warm-up 500 yards mixed, then 400, 300, 200, 100 ea at slightly faster pace	Swim: warm-up then do a 800 (for time) Combo: Bike 45 min,run 15min
2	Swim: 16 x 75 (done as 4 sets of four 75's). Rest 1 min btn sets. And 15 sec btn each 75 Run: EZ 30 minutes	Bike: 5 x 8-min intervals. 4 min EZ spin btn each interval warm-up and cool down as needed	Swim: 3 x 400 broken swims. Rest 4 min btn 400's. Run: Same as Week 1. for 10 laps	Bike: EZ 15 minute then 60 min of flat riding at 80% effort of max.	Swim: 600 warm-up then 500, 400, 300, 200 each slightly faster pace	Swim: warm-up then,1200 (for time) Combo: Bike 60 min, run 20 min. as described
3	Swim: 16 x 100 (in sets of 4). Rest 1 min btn sets and 20 sec btn each 100. Run: EZ 35 minutes	Bike: 4 x 10-min intervals(100%) with 5-min EZ spin btn each interval warm-up and cool down as needed	Swim: 3 x 500 broken swims. Rest 3 minutes btn 500's Run: Same as week 1. for 12 laps	Bike: 45 minute of hills, then 18 min on flats done as (1 min at 100%, 3 min easy).	Swim: 800 warm-up then 600, 400, 300 each slightly faster pace	Swim: warm-up then, 1600 (for time) Combo: Bike 80 min, run 30 min. as described
4	Swim: Same as week 2. Run: 40 min EZ	Bike: 60 min (easy)	Swim: warm up 400 mixed. 400/100/50 x 2 Run: 40 min EZ	Bike: 60minutes of hilly course.	Swim: Same as week 1.	Swim: Same as week 1.

Repeat this 4-week cycle three times, beginning 12 weeks before the event. The first cycle is swim-heavy. To shift focus to the bike or run, do this: For the second cycle, add one bike workout (a local group ride, for example) and delete one swim workout. For the third cycle, replace Thursday's bike workout with a 30-minute hilly run course. Week four is for active recovery; keep it the same over the 12 weeks. Go easy in workouts the week of the event.

Weekly Workout Sequence

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Swim		S1		S2		S3	S4
Bike			B1		B2		
Run		R1		R2			C1
Optional			Weight 1		Weight2		

Description of Workouts

WEEK 1

Swim: (in a 25 yd or meter pool or 50 m pool)

Some workouts call for a pace average, this is calculated off your current fitness level, you need to know this time prior to starting the program. Swim a 100yd/m (from a wall push) as fast as you can and record time. Then calculate the 70%, 80% and 90% pacing effort levels.

Example : if your 100yd/m top speed time is 90 seconds, multiply 90 by .3, which is 27 seconds, now add 27 seconds back to the top speed time of 90 seconds, which equals 117 seconds or 1 minute and 57 seconds, so with the 70% effort pace per 100yd/m you should average 1 minute and 57 seconds for each 100. 80% effort pace is $90 \times .2 = 18$ seconds add back to 90 to get 1 minute 48 seconds pace per 100. 90% effort pace is $90 \times .1 = 9$ seconds added to 90 to get 1 minute 39 seconds per 100.

Most pools have pace clocks and it can be difficult to calculate times that end in seconds other than multiples of 5 or 10 seconds, so use the calculated paces as guidelines and round up or down to the nearest 5 second multiple. So in our example above the 70% effort pace of 1:57 would become 2 minutes per 100 pace, and the 80% effort would be 1:50 pace per 100 , the 90% effort 1: 40 pace per 100. Every 4 weeks do a 100 current fitness level pace calculation.

S1 = 16x50 yards done as 4 sets of four 50's. Do the first set of 4 at 70% of your maximum effort and then push 10% harder in each subsequent set of the four, 50's (the last set is done at 100%). Rest one minute between sets and 15 seconds between each 50 within a set.

Example : if your top speed for one 50 is 45 seconds, then the 1st set of four 50's would be all averaging 58 seconds , the second set average 55 seconds, 3rd set average right around 50 seconds, last set of four 50's average each one under 50 seconds.

S2 = 3x300 broken swims. First 300: 12 x 25 fast with 5 seconds rest after each 25. Second 300: One continuous strong effort (at 80% of maximum effort). Third 300: 3x100 with 30 seconds rest between 100s. Begin the first 100 at 80% of maximum effort, and then increase intensity by 10%, so the final 100 is done at 100% effort. Rest 2 minutes between each broken 300 or kick an EZ 100.

S3 = Ladder workout. 500 done as a warm-up of continuous swimming, drills, kicking mixture. 400 is done at an 70% pace average per 100, 300 done at an 80% pace per 100 average, 200 done at a 90% pace per 100 average, 100 at 100% effort). Rest as needed between each swim.

S4 = continuous swim for 800 (at an "all-out" effort) and record time, with the 50's being a warm-up or warm-up as needed. It is recommended to do couple "pace 100's" and a couple of 25 or 50 sprints before any timed swim.

Bike:

B1 = Four, 5-minute intervals at 100% effort. Ride easy for 2 minutes between intervals. Warm-up and cool down for 15 minutes. (each week ideally should be done over the same relatively flat course)

B2 = 40 minutes continuous at 80% effort. Warm-up and cool down for 10 minutes each. Try to do on the same course each time for time comparison.

Run:

R1 = Continuous running for 25 minutes at a relaxed pace (one you can carry a conversation with someone while running)

R2 = Interval work on a 400m track. Sprint the straight-aways and jog the curves for 8 laps. Warm-up for 12 minutes or as needed and cool down as needed. Stretch afterward.

Combination Workout:

Effort level and % of max effort is measured as your perceived exertion during the interval or by a pre-established max heart rate you have determined from a VO2 test of max HR formula. Corresponding max HR's for the bike are 10 to 15 beats per minute lower than the run. These numbers can change slightly throughout the training program by a variety of factors.

C1 = Bike 45 minutes continuous. Start at 70% of max effort and increase effort level by 10% every 15 minutes. Run 15 minutes continuous by starting at 70% of maximum effort and increase effort level by 10% every 5 minutes. Cool down as needed.

Optional Weight Workouts:

Weights 1 = Full-body circuit training. One set of 20 light weight repetitions for each exercise.

Weight 2 = Full-body circuit training. Two sets of 8 repetitions. First set is a warm-up; keep weights light. Second set is done to failure usually on seventh or eighth repetition.

WEEK 2

Swim:

S1 = the 50's become 75's and rest 1 minute btn sets of 4 and 15 seconds after each 75.

S2 = 300's become 400's done in the same broken patterned as described in swim workout S2 of week 1, except change the 12 x 25 fast to 8 x 50 fast. And rest is 4 minutes btn each 400.

S3 = Ladder workout becomes 600 warm-up mixed swimming with drills then main set is 500, 400, 300, 200 each at a slightly faster pace with 200 being 100% effort

S4 = 1,200 continuous swim for time. Use appropriate warm-up

Bike:

B1 = 5x8-minute intervals at 100%. EZ spin 4 minutes between intervals. Appropriate warm-up and cool down

B2 = warm-up appropriate then 60 minutes on flat course at 80% effort of max.

Run:

R1 = Same as week R1 on week 1 but for 30 minutes.

R2 = same as R2 for week 1 but do 10 laps of track.

Combination Workout:

C1 = Bike for 60 minutes continuous. Start at 70% of maximum effort or HR if using monitor and increase effort level by 10% or 5 to 7 beats pr minute every 20 minutes. Immediately after bike, run 20 seconds fast and 40 seconds easy for 20 minutes continuous.

Optional Weight Workouts: use the following sequence for entire 12 weeks, except race week delete the weight 2 workout

Weights 1 = Full-body circuit. 2 sets of 15 repetitions with lightweight for the first set to warm-up then use /moderate weights for second set.

Weights 2 = Full-body circuit. 3 sets of 10, 1st set is warm-up, 2nd and 3rd sets are to failure between 8th – 10th repetitions in the set.

WEEK 3

Swim:

S1 = 75s become 100s with 20 seconds rest between each 100.

S2 = same broken format as S1 week 2 except increase to broken 500's. take 3 minutes rest between 500's. the 8 x 50's becomes 10 x 50.

S3 = Ladder workout becomes 800 warm-up then main set is a 600, 400, 300 each at a slightly faster pace as described in S3 workout of week 1. Here the % effort will be 80% for the 600, 90% for the 400 and 100% for the 300.

S4 = 1,500 continuous swim for time . Use appropriate warm-up

Bike:

B1 = 4x10-minute intervals at 100%. EZ spin 5 minutes between 10 minute intervals. Use warm-up and warm down.

B2 = 45 minutes on a hilly course. Then 18 continuous minutes of flat course riding done as 1 minute at 100% effort followed by 3 minutes easy. (Can also simulate this workout on a wind trainer)

Run:

R1 = EZ 35 minutes continuous

R2 = same as R2 week 1 but for 12 laps.

Combination Workout:

C1 = Warm-up 15 minutes. Bike is 2x25 minutes at 80% of max effort. EZ spin 7 minutes between each 25 minute interval. Immediately after bike, run 30 minutes at a steady pace (at 80% effort).

Optional Weight Workouts:

Same as week 2.

WEEK 4

Swim:

S1 = Same as S 1 week 2.

S2 = Warm up 400 mixed. Then 400 80% effort, 100 EZ, 50 at 100% effort, take 1 minute between each. Repeat set 400,100,50.

S3= same as S 3 week 1

S4= same as S4 week 1

Bike:

B1 = 1 hour easy.

B2 = 60 minutes on a hilly course. Accelerate at the top portion of each hill.

Run:

Both R1 and R2 are 40 minutes at an easy pace.

Optional Weight Workout:

Weights 1 = Full-body circuit using machines or free weights or combination. One set of 25 repetitions with lightweight intensity. (reps 20 – 25 should create a slight Lactic acid burn)

End Triathlon training document