



Transition Tips for Mrs. T's

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Compiled by Ken Johnson

Member, RunBig Chicago, Chicago Triathlon Club

RunBig Chicago

www.runbig.org

RunBig Chicago, a Clydesdale Club for running, fitness and multisport for the big athlete. The Club mission is to promote weight division competition at area events, and provide a forum for discussion of events and topics relevant to Big Athletes. The Club helps organize and arrange club meetings, group runs and swims and get togethers at races and multisport events in the greater Chicagoland area. Visit www.runbig.org to signup on-line.

General Mrs. T's Information

- Registration tends to be very crowded on Fridays and Saturday morning. Last year you could breeze your way through Saturday afternoon.
- But, allow plenty of time to get through registration.
- Get your swim markings at registration. Then get a black marker and redo them Sunday morning.
- Go to a course talk at registration if this is your first Mrs. T's.
- If you are a USA Triathlon member, bring your card to registration – otherwise, you will have to stand in a long line to buy a one day permit.
- Make sure you have your swim waiver filled out and signed, before you start registration. Waivers can be downloaded from www.caprievents.com.
- Check that your Championship Chip is working correctly before proceeding.

Swim

- You will go into with water with your wave, some 150-160 of your closest friends.
- The water is shallow with a rocky bottom, but be prepared to tread water for a bit.
- Fast swimmers to the front of the group, slow swimmers to the back.
- You are going to get beat up, with flailing arms and legs everywhere. Grit your teeth and prepare for it. Make sure your goggles are snug.
- You are not allowed to swim over another swimmer. This happens all the time.
- If you are at all worried about your swimming, stay near the breakwater. There is a rope you can hold onto. Likewise, you can hold onto a lifeguard boat. This is perfectly acceptable.
- If you seek more clear water, go to the outside (lake side) of the swim course when swimming north. This will give you a bit more room. However, watch for the lifeguard boats. You must swim inside them, and don't hit them!
- It's about 500 yards from the swim exit to the transition area. Be ready for a run. Try to keep your heart rate down while swimming, so you have some reserve for the run to transition.

Bike

- You must have your bike helmet on and buckled before uncracking your bike.
- No riding in transition. Run your bike out, then mount. Unmount outside the transition entrance, and run your bike in.
- Remember: you ride on the LEFT and pass on the RIGHT.
- Understand drafting: you need to stay at least 3 bike lengths behind the bike in front of you unless passing. Your pass must be completed in 15 seconds.
- There are still cars in the outside lanes of Lake Shore Drive. Don't be intimidated by them. Staying left will keep you aware from the traffic.
- Be very careful of the turnaround(s). You need to go single file and go slowly.
- There will be water bottle exchanges at the north (Foster Ave) bike turnaround. Take a new bottle and throw your old bottle where indicated. (If you plan on doing this, take an old bottle to toss – not one of your favorites.)
- If you plan to eat on the bike (energy bars/gels), make sure you have practiced this in training. Gels can be taped to your bike frame by the top, then you can tear them off (opening the pouch) and eat them. Don't litter. Put the empty gel in a pocket or bike bag, or throw it out at the bottle exchange.

Run

- Review the sprint versus the international course so you understand where the turn around points are.
- After exiting the transition, you'll run on the path then on the grass for a section, as you go by the swim start and finish – where there may still be people waiting to begin!
- You will be on the Lakefront path south of the museum campus. Keep an eye out for cyclists and rollerbladers.
- Smile when you come down the ramp to go under LSD and proceed to the finish. That's where the camera people usually are.
- Encourage others who might be having a rough time of those last couple of miles.

Race Day Checklist

From Registration

Race Number
Safety Pins (or own race belt)
Wristband
Helmet Number
Bike Number
Championship Chip
Velcro Chip Band
Swim Cap

Transition

Gear Bag
Large Towel for ground
Balloon/Flag/location marker
Water bottle for transition
Small Towel for drying off

General

Watch
Heart Rate Monitor
Body Lube
Duct Tape (it fixes everything)

Swim

Swimsuit or Tri-suit
Goggles (+ extra pair)
Wet suit

Bike

Bike
Bike Helmet (ANSI, SNELL)
Gloves
Bike shorts/jersey
Bike Computer
Water Bottle(s)
Bike Shoes
Socks
Spare tube
Bike pump/inflator
Tire levers
Energy Bars/Gels

Run:

Run shorts/shirt
Running shoes
Socks
Hat/sweat band
Energy Bars/Gels
Water bottle & carrier

Rules do not permit any extra equipment in the transition, and no large duffle bags.

Lay out all your gear the night before. Double-check everything against your list. Pack everything needed for transition into your gear bag. Leave what you need for the morning out and ready to put on.

Check your tires on Saturday. Make sure they are inflated, no nicks or cuts. Pump the tires up to the recommended pressure. Take a floor pump & pressure gage with you in the car, so you can reinflate them if necessary before going into transition.

Day of the Race

- Get to the transition early. It opens at 4:45am and closes at 6:15am.
- Check the pressure in your bike tires before going to transition.
- Put on sunscreen early.
- Body Lube your neck if you are wearing a wet suit to prevent chafing. Likewise do your arms if you are wearing a sleeveless model.
- Body Lube other sensitive parts, like nipples and groin, for the bike and run.
- Don't use Vaseline if you are wearing a wet suit – it's bad for the neoprene. If you don't have Runner's Lube or Body Glide, or something similar, Pam works in a pinch.
- Bike helmets are inspected upon entrance to the transition.
- Have your race numbers on the bike handlebars and bike helmet.
- Don't wait in line to get your swim markings. Get them done at registration, then re-do them yourself with a black marker.
- Be prepared to wait. With 38 waves, you may very well be waiting 2-3 hours before you actually start.
 - DON'T put on your wet suit until your wave starts lining up. Otherwise you may overheat.
 - Bring water/sports drink with you to the start. You need to stay hydrated.
 - Wear something on your feet, at least cheap flip-flops.
 - This year there is a gear check at the swim start. But don't take anything you can't stand to lose.
 - Use the bathrooms in Grant Park or on Columbus Drive at the finish line. They won't be as crowded.
- Remember that the transition doesn't reopen until the last person heads out on the run, approximately 11:30. Anything you need at the finish line take with you on the run.
- All gear must be out of the transition area by 1:30pm.

Transition Tips and Tricks

- Your wrist band is what gives you access to the transition area.
- Bike racks are separated into Sprint and International, with racks numbered by wave (the numbers are at the end of the racks).
- **KNOW YOUR RACK NUMBER.**
- Many people like to mark their bike location with a balloon or some type of flag. If you don't have one, put your bike next to someone who does. Trees can also serve this purpose, or tie a bandana to the rack.
- The bike racks are I-o-n-g. Think about where to set up. Closer to the swim in means the less you have to run from the swim and out on the run, but longer you have to go in and out with your bike. Closer to the bike exit means longer swim in and run out run, but less you have to go with your bike. If you have bike shoes that aren't that comfortable to run in, set up towards the bike exit.
- Setting up near the bike exit will mean a shorter transition time, all things being equal.
- Put your bike in a low gear. You'll have to go up a ramp to LSD as you start.
- Bring a large beach towel to put down next to your bike. If you have a unique one, it can help you locate your bike – assuming you run down the right rack.

- On the towel, going from the back of the bike to the front, lay out your bike gear closest to you and the run gear closest to the rack.
- Open up your bike shoes and running shoes by loosening the straps/laces.
- Roll down your socks to the ankle – makes them easier to get on.
- Unbuckle the bike helmet strap, put the straps over the side, and put the helmet on your handlebars (if it will safely stay there). Undo your bike gloves and put in the helmet. Sit your sunglasses, open, on top of the gloves.
- Open zippers of all clothing.

As soon as you have everything set up, walk to the Swim in. Walk back to your bike. Count the racks, aisles, etc. Look for “landmarks” to point you to your rack. Go down your rack to find your bike. Repeat.

Now walk from your bike to the Bike exit/entrance. Thinking about doing this with your bike. See how to get out and where you can mount your bike after exiting, and where you have to dismount coming back in. Now walk back to your bike. Look for “landmarks” in this direction to point you to your rack and to your run gear. Find your bike. Repeat.

Now walk from your bike to the Run out. Think about the best way to get there. Repeat.

T1

- When you come out of the water, unzip your wetsuit and pull it down to your waist. This helps prevent overheating.
- Take off your goggles and swim cap immediately on exit.
- Some people prefer to take the wetsuit off completely at the swim exit. If you do this, move up into the grass to get out of everyone’s way.
- If you are worried about your feet, have a friend at the swim exit (or up the path a ways) hand you a pair of sandals or flip-flops to wear up to the transition area.
- Pull your wetsuit off inside out. Put it down on your towel out of the way, under the rack. Don’t worry about folding it; you can do that after the race.
- Put on shorts, shirt, socks, shoes. Put on sunglasses, bike gloves, then put on your helmet and fasten it. Grab our bike off the rack and head toward the exit. NOTE: Helmet on and fastened before unracking your bike!

T2

- When you are coming towards the end of the bike course, shift to a lower gear and pedal faster (higher cadence). This helps prepare your legs for the run.
- Dismount in the designated area; you cannot ride into the transition area.
- Keep your helmet on and buckled until you rack your bike.
- Jog easily with your bike to find your stuff. Your legs will probably feel like they’re made of stone. It’ll get better when you get out onto the run.
- Put your running shoes on first. This way you can grab the other stuff (hat, gels, etc.) and put them on as you head toward the exit.

Resources

RunBig Chicago Multisport Club

<http://www.runbig.org>

Chicago Triathlon Club

<http://www.chicagotriclub.com>

Vertel's

<http://www.vertels.net>

Team Clydesdale

<http://www.teamclydesdale.com>

USA Triathlon

<http://www.usatriathlon.org>

USA Triathlon Mideast Region

<http://www.freewheel.com/me-tri/>

Tri-Newbies

<http://www.trinewbies.com>

Triathlete Magazine

<http://www.triathletemag.com>

Inside Triathlon

<http://www.insidetri.com>

Slow Twitch

<http://www.slowtwitch.com>

Transition Times

<http://www.transitiontimes.com>

Extreme Triathlon

<http://www.xtri.com>

CoolTri

<http://www.cooltri.com>

Triathlete.Com

<http://www.triathlete.com>

TriFind Triathlon Calendar

<http://www.trifind.com>

3Athlete

<http://3athlete.com>

Chicago Athlete

<http://www.chicagoaa.com>

Windy City Sports

<http://www.windycitysportsmag.com>

Chicago Area Runners Association

<http://www.cararuns.org>