

FIND A FOX Newsletter #1

March 15, 2009—Welcome & goals

Congratulations! You've set a goal to complete your first triathlon. You may have worked out before, but now you are training. Each workout will bring you closer to that beautiful summer day that will see you swim, bike, and finally run across that finish line. For many of us, the target on the distant horizon provides the motivation to stick to our training plan. But in the dead of Wisconsin winter, the finish line feels very far away. There is great value in setting mini, incremental goals along the way. For instance, maybe today you are able to complete two lengths of the pool before you need a rest. You might set a goal that within two weeks, you'll progress to finish four lengths without a break. When you succeed, celebrate! Share your good news with your Fox or another "cheerleader" in your life. Each incremental step is important. Focus not on how far you must yet go—focus on how far you have already come!

When you finally get to race day, you probably have a goal in mind for the day, too. Maybe it's to finish in a certain time, or just to finish with a smile on your face. Consider setting yourself a three-tiered goal. What is it you hope to do? What would your "I'm having a perfect day" dream goal be? Finally, what's your backup plan? What will you do if it turns out to be horrible weather, or you get a flat tire, or something else doesn't go according to plan? You don't have to tell anybody what your hopes and dreams are, but it helps to have some focus during the race.

Have you chosen a target race? Two great sprint-distance races to choose include the Green Bay Triathlon on Sunday June 7, and the High Cliff triathlon on Saturday June 20. Each is a great choice for newbies. At Green Bay, the swim is in a manmade lake and is never too deep. High Cliff, of course, is the signature race of the Fox Cities Tri club and comes with tons of support built in.

I'm Katy, and I'll be your Find a Fox guide from now until June. Every two weeks, I'll send out a newsletter with some bit of triathlon information and some topics you might want to talk about with your mentor. Opinions expressed in the newsletter are, naturally, my own. Your Fox might have another perspective that could be helpful to you.

To introduce myself, I became a triathlete in 2006 because a friend

decided she was going to do a triathlon. I thought, “if she can do it, surely I can!” I’d been a high school swimmer (lucky me) and had been running since 2003. However, because I was a frustrated and oft-injured runner, I’d been doing lots of spin classes, although I didn’t have much road biking experience. Now I find the bike to be one of the most enjoyable parts of race day. (Incidentally, I’ve found that the cross training required by triathlon has kept me healthier, made me stronger, and ultimately, a better athlete.)

Learn the lingo

A bit of “tri specific” jargon will be a recurring feature in the newsletter. This time we’ll cover the different triathlon distances.

Super sprint—this is the shortest triathlon distance, and it is not standardized. Typically, the swim is 200 to 400 yards, the bike is around 10 miles, and the run is around a mile.

Sprint—this distance is not standardized either, but the swim will typically be 400 to 800 yards, the bike 15 to 20 miles, and the run is often a 5K (which is 3.1 miles)

Olympic or international distance—this sounds like it should be standardized, but it isn’t always. At the Beijing Olympics, triathletes swam 1500 m, biked 40 km and ran 10,000 m.

Half Ironman—Finally, a definition that we all agree on! 1.2 mile swim, 56 mile bike, and 13.1 mile run. Sometimes called a Tin Man.

Ironman—2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike, and 26.2 mile run.

Fox & Kit Chat

This section of the newsletter is meant to give you some conversation starters with your mentor. But don’t let this list restrict you—ask your Fox anything you need to know!

- Introduce yourself—your name, your history
- Share your goals. What race or races do you want to do this year? Why did you decide to do your first triathlon?
- Ask your Fox what his or her favorite race is. What’s his or her best triathlon memory?