

THE FINISH LINE



Roger and Candace Little dance during their Commitment Ceremony on New Years Eve. Details on page 21.

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Mad Dogs #1 and #2, Rue and Kathy Morgan preside at the 2024 Hair of the Dog Mock Tri and Party.

Established on November 6, 1993, the St Pete Mad Dogs Triathlon Club is a not for profit organization designed to promote the sport of triathlon. The club is comprised of fun loving triathletes who train, race and howl together, with members of all levels of experience and expertise.

The Finish Line is a medium for communicating the latest club news, as well as an informal source for what's happening in the sport of triathlon as it affects us. Articles published in The Finish Line may contain opinions of the author, not necessarily the club.

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Website:

stpetemaddogstriathlonclub.wildapricot.org

Articles, or photos may be submitted to chuck.lohman@yahoo.com. Items should be sent by the 15th of the month preceding the issue.

Advertising checks should be mailed to: St Pete Mad Dog Triathlon Club, P.O. Box 635 St Petersburg, FL 33731-0635. Please make check payable to St Pete Mad Dogs.

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Editor's Column

Well, Mad Dogs, January and February represent the triathlon hibernation season (except for a few intrepid souls that raced at Sarasota on the 5th of January). Of course, these dreary days are the opportunity to test your legs at various running races at Disney World, St. Pete Beach, Gasparilla and other venues in the local area. I hope all Mad Dog participants in the St. Pete Beach Classic enjoyed the race because rumors indicate that the race may become extinct unless a new sponsor and director can be found.

please go to page 5..



TRAINING CALENDAR

	SWIM	BIKE	RUN
MONDAY	5:30 - 7 am St. Pete Beach Aquatics Club coached by Leo Briceno (fee)	8 am. From USFSP- 6th Ave & 2nd St S. (SPBC)16 miles 20-21 mph.	
TUESDAY	6:30-8 pm NorthshorePool. Coach Joe Biondi \$9.00 fee.	6 am. Base miles 22-25 mph ride from SPB&F 4th St. store. 8 am. From USFSP- 6th Ave & 2nd St S. (SPBC)16 miles 20-21 mph.	5 pm. Track workout coached by Joe Burgasser. SPC Track 5th Ave and 70 St N.
WEDNESDAY	6 pm. Mad Dog OWS. Meet at Hurley Park. Pass-A-Grille. Resumes after DST.		7:30 am. Mad Dog Run. Meet at Addicted to the Bean - Sun Blvd & Pinellas Bayway.
THURSDAY	5:30 - 7 am St. Pete Beach Aquatics Club coached by Leo Briceno (fee) 6:30-8 pm Northshore Pool Coach Joe Biondi \$9.00 fee	8 am. From USFSP- 6th Ave & 2nd St S. (SPBC)16 miles 20-21 mph.	
FRIDAY	8 am. Group swim Sunset Beach. Meet at Yost's 143-91 Ave S.	8 am. From USFSP- 6th Ave & 2nd St S. (SPBC)16 miles 20-21 mph.	
SATURDAY		8:00 am (during DST). Club Rides. from Northshore Pool. Staged by speed. 16-18 mph. 20 mph. 22 mph. 24 mph.	6:30 am from Fit 4 Life 75th Ave. SPB. SPRR
SUNDAY		Ft De Soto Brick, rolling at 8:00 am. See Facebook posts for details.	6:30 am long run alternating from Hurley Park PAG and Northshore Pool. SPRR.

MAD DOG NEWS

Nice turnout for the Hair of the Dog Mock Tri/Party on the 1st of January. Turned out to be a great day. Rue Morgan (Mad Dog #1) participated and motivated everyone. Thanks to John and Pam Hollenhorst for supporting all logistics for the event, including ordering pizza for the hungry Mad Dogs.

Congrats to the following All American Triathletes for 2023

Mad Dogs

Art Halttunen

Catherine Jadot

John Macedo

Friends of Mad Dogs

Celia Dubey

Gail Norman

Dougin Walker

Jill Walker

Good news. Pros Mad Dog Paula Findley and her fiancée Eric Lagerstrom plan to participate in the 2024 St. Anthony's. It will be great to see them again.

Congrats to Carolyn Kiper who completed yet another Disney Goofy Challenge, racing the Half Marathon on Saturday and the Marathon on Sunday, while placing high in her age group for both races.

For Mad Dogs coming out of triathlon hibernation during the Winter, I found some encouraging words from Sir Mick Jagger...

"If you start me up, I'll never stop.
You've got to never, never, never stop.
Ride like the wind at double speed.
I'll take you to places that you've never, never seen."

For younger Mad Dogs, lyrics from *Start Me Up*.

WELCOME NEW MAD DOGS!

#4043 - Daniel Alvarez-Mollinet

St. Petersburg

#4044 - Mark Clark

St. Petersburg

#4045 - Mark Butt

Bradenton

#4046 - Kyle Kelleman

St. Petersburg

#4047 - Jeff Coffey

St. Petersburg

Editor's Comments continued:

All of you who plan to compete in triathlons this year be sure to have your bikes checked. I did so and was shocked at the amount of deterioration caused by perspiration and the local climate.

A remote Mad Dog, Lorraine Hurley from Tennessee, attended the Hair of the Dog party on New Years. When I met her and learned of her accomplishments I asked her to submit a race report of her recent competition at IM Worlds Kona. I think you'll enjoy reading it. Since very little triathlon racing has been done in the last few months, I also added a "Retro Race Report" of the Lohman's experience at the Crystal River venue. Beware the Vortex!

Mad Dogs Rule,
Chuck Lohman, Editor

RACE RESULTS

All Mad Dogs are encouraged to submit race results. E-mail me at chuck.lohman@yahoo.com. There is no automatic program to search for Mad Dogs.

Disney Marathon Weekend - 6/7 Jan

Half Marathon

Finisher -

Carolyn Kiper (top 10%)

Marathon

Finisher -

Carolyn Kiper (top 13%)

Sarasota Alpha Win Triathlon - 7 Jan

1st Place -

Leo Budo (4th overall)

Sean Simmons

3rd Place -

Andres Marte-Grau

St. Pete Classic - 13/14 Jan

5K

2nd Place -

Annette Frisch

4th Place -

Ginger Herring

5th Place -

Cathy DeHaan

Kip Vosburgh

10K

1st Place -

Leo Budo

Reva Moeller

Michael Oertle

Cindy Perrett

5th Place -

Pam Greene

St. Pete Classic - 13/14 Jan

Half Marathon

1st Place -

Zeina Abdo

Patti Spence

2nd Place -

Betsy Banks

John Hollenhorst

4th Place -

Lenny Aron

Tampa Bay Frogman Swim - 13 Jan

Finishers -

Dawn Clark

Aaron Freedman

Steve Swift

UPCOMING RACES



4 Feb - Chilly Willy Duathlon
Ft. DeSoto, FL
Sprint Duathlon
www.runsignup.com



10 Feb - Super Bowl Duathlon
Clermont, FL
Sprint Duathlon
www.runsignup.com



24-25 Feb - Gasparilla Dist Class.
Tampa, FL
5K, 8k, 15K Half Marathon
www.raceroster.com



9 Mar - Clash Miami Triathlon
Homestead-Miami Speedway, FL
Half Iron
www.clashendurance.com



17 Mar - IM 70.3 Puerto Rico
San Juan, Puerto Rico
IM 70.3
www.ironman.com

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



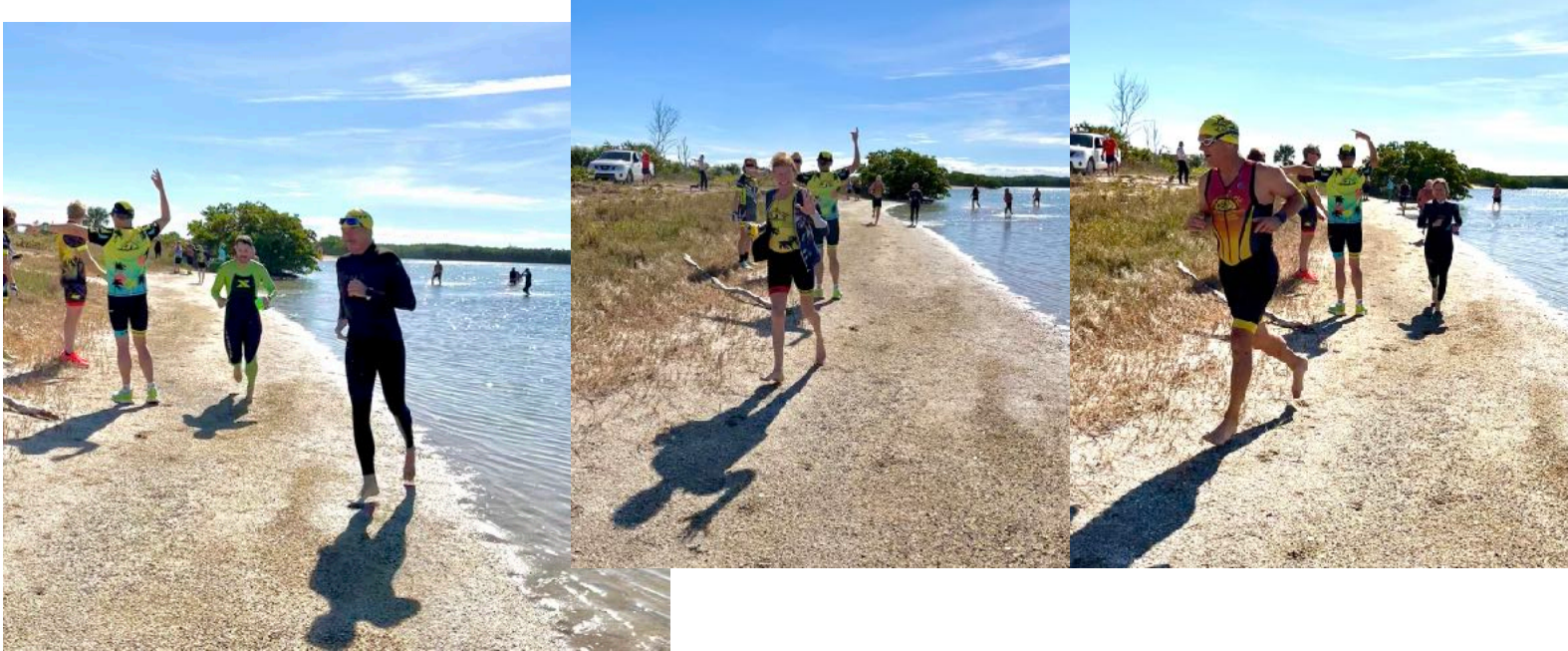
David Smith	2nd
Abid Khaleel	5th
Alexa Lampasona	5th
Carol Hollenbeck	7th
Erinne Mickle	12th
Valentines Day	14th
Kimberly Poor	14th
Lisa Pesta	20th
David Sitton	20th
Madison Barrett	23rd
Dan Runyon	24th
Christine Oertle	26th

MAD DOG PICTURES

Hair of the Dog pictures from Pam Hollenhorst



MAD DOG PICTURES



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MAD DOG PICTURES



MAD DOG PICTURES



MAD DOG PICTURES



MAD DOG PICTURES



MAD DOG PICTURES

St. Pete Classic Pix from Pam Hollenhorst



David Randle



Team Mad Dog



Vicky Linkovich



Paula Shea



Christine Oertle



Cindy Perrett

MAD DOG PICTURES

St. Pete Classic Pix from Pam Hollenhorst



Zeina Abdo



Lenny Aron and John Hollenhorst

Bill Hendrick, John Hollenhorst, Kim Case & Lenny Aron



Bill Hendrick



Patti Spence

MAD DOG PICTURES



Local Mad Dog Steve Shelton and California Mad Dog Clive Heke



Jessica Parrish Ready to race

Mad Dog Roger Little Drama



Roger and Candace Little were married last August 26th at Roger's estate in Massachusetts. Roger, as you know, is an entrepreneur, and renown triathlete - a former World Champion. Candace is an author, an amateur comedian and experienced dressage performer and coach. They decided to honeymoon in Kona at the 2023 Ironman Championships. While showing off his well know "freestyle" during a swim, Roger unfortunately lost his wedding ring at Dig Me Beach. Oops. In an effort to redeem himself, Roger proposed to Candace that they hold a commitment ceremony on New Years Eve in St. Petersburg and (re) exchange rings. The festivities ended with a lovely dance.

Training Tip - 40/20 Cardio and Strength Workout

If you want to mix things up a bit in your training routine, here's a good cardio and strength workout to try. It's short and you can do it in a gym or at home. Do this workout two to three days a week, preferably on your swim days.

Start with about ten minutes of warm up movements, such as arm swings, leg strides, butt kicks, neck and shoulder stretches, hamstring stretches, leg swings front-to-back and side-to-side, etc. When you break into a mild sweat, that's your signal that your muscles are warm enough to start the main set.

The main set consists of 18 minutes divided into 6 sets of three minutes each; all continuous. Each three minutes is a 40/20 split of work and rest, as shown below.

You want do as many repetitions of each exercise as you can in 40 seconds without getting sloppy. Maintain good form and control. And then rest for 20 seconds. Repeat that exercise for a total of three minutes.... That's one set. Then move on to the next exercise. Where dumbbells are used, choose a light to moderate weight. This workout is about repetitions not intense resistance

Set # 1. Push ups. 40/20 x 3

Set # 2. Burpees 40/20 x 3

Set # 3. Standing torso twists with a DB or heavy ball, arms extended out. 40/20 x 3

Set # 4. Lunges with DB hanging at your sides. 40/20 x 3

Set # 5. Good Mornings (i.e., toe touches) with one shoulder press with DB. 40/20 x 3

Set # 6. Goblet Squats with a DB held to your chest. 40/20 x 3

Be disciplined about the 40/20 timeframe; try not to take longer than 20 seconds rest within a set. If you feel that 20 seconds isn't a long enough rest, reduce the number of repetitions that you do within the 40 seconds. Ideally, the 40/20 should be continuous throughout the entire workout. If you really need to take a longer rest, do it only between sets.

When you're done, cool down for about 10 minutes with static stretching.

Train smart. Race fast.

Frank Adornato





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Much Appreciation to Tennessee Mad Dog Lorraine Hurley For Submitting a Race Report From Ironman World Championship in Kona. She splits hertime between Chattanooga, TN and St. Pete, where she and her husband have had a home down the Bayway from Ft. DeSoto since 2016.

I was very blessed to race in the Ironman World Championship in Kona, Hawaii this past October after qualifying at IM Arizona in 2022 (2nd AG). My goal was simply to not let anything—including my ego—ruin this amazing opportunity, and to enjoy the experience. I knew it would likely take longer than my other races and I hoped to put in a respectable time but after all, I wasn't working to win my age group this time! I had been to the World Championship before as a spectator but never as a competitor.

I was fortunate to arrive in Kona eight days before the race. There were a number of us from Chattanooga racing, and Kona was full of people I treasure, including friends from Team Zoot, QT2, Quintana Roo and Ironman. It was an amazing reunion.

This was the first time the World Championship in Kona was exclusively women, the men having raced in Nice, France a month earlier. Everyone speculated about how the women would do. Evidently, we were a tough bunch! Every single athlete completed the swim (unprecedented) and we had a record high completion rate of 97.23%, compared to an average of about 93% in a typical year. I'm proud to have been one of them.

The IMWC course in Kona is a standard full IM: 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike and then a marathon (26.2 miles). It has an out-and-back, open-water ocean swim with a boat anchored at the halfway point. Both transitions (T1 and T2) are on the pier next to the swim course.

The bike starts with a kind of a figure-eight around town before heading into rollers in the hot, black lava fields of the Queen K (Kaahumanu) Highway, up a volcanic mountain to the turn-around in the town of Hawi ("hah-vee"). Then you descend the mountain, head back through the lava fields and into town.

The first third of the marathon is an out-and-back through town along Ali'i Drive, lined with cheering people and oceanside parks and beaches. Then you climb Palani Rd and run out the Queen K toward the airport. In the last couple of years, the run course has covered less of Ali'i Drive and added on more by the Energy Lab, an industrial park out-and-back off the Queen K. There are now six or seven miles between first seeing the turn to the Energy Lab and finally leaving it behind. It's a shame but I believe the town requested that we not interfere so much with local traffic on Ali'i.

This was my first full *non-wetsuit* ocean swim, so doing the whole course on the Ho'Ala practice swim was a great confidence-booster. The warm, aqua water and colorful tropical fish are simply magical! The only issue for many of us was severe chafing from the very salty water.

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My friend Missi Johnson and I rode our bikes up and down the climb to Hawi, thanks to our Tennessee-sherpa-posse and their mini-van! It was challenging but we were ready. I'm not a speed demon so I lose more going up than I gain coming down. But later I had a good ride on the Queen K so I was confident going into the race.

I'm a big believer in the "nothing new on race-day" motto. But I was concerned by how dark the Energy Lab got at night, so I bought a light at the last minute with little time to charge it before check-in. (We were to have no access to our gear bags on race day, which is unusual.)

At bike check-in, in recent years Ironman has literally rolled out the "red carpet" leading into transition where you pass sponsor's tents, announcers interviewing well-known athletes and a team of folks doing the infamous Bike Count for Triathlete Magazine; they take an inventory of every athlete's bike and gear and publish the totals that night. There are photos. It makes you feel like a star!

Race day! My husband Peter was as sick as a dog with what turned out to be the flu (!) so I was grateful to get a good night's sleep and begin race day with only the mildest of symptoms myself. He had his own endurance event ahead, cheering for me all day!

I had a classic Kona experience: heat, all sun with no shade, wind and plenty of climbing! It's not any one thing that makes it such a tough day; it's all of it in combination.

This year the swim started in age-groups, five to ten minutes apart, not the infamous mass start of years past. The few porta-potties were also open to the public and I barely made it into my swim corral on time before us old ladies (60+) swam out the few hundred yards to the in-water start. I was at peace. I counted my strokes—more than 3000 of them by the end. My Garmin watch buzzing intermittently gave me a reference for my progress (distance) and pace (strokes/500 yards).

It's hard to be stressed out in aquamarine water full of tropical fish! I wasn't battered much by my fellow swimmers and was pleasantly surprised to find the current had reversed since the other day and was in my favor coming back. It's so much nicer to speed up than to slow down, don't you think?

I hugged a friend volunteering at the swim finish and showered off most of that abrasive saltwater. In T1, I was careful to watch my feet as we ran the entire length of the pier between bikes and concrete pilings.

I felt good starting the bike. My pace was low in town but I figured that was due to so many turns before heading out. Once on the Queen K, I got back on track pace-wise. It was the kind of day when you just felt good to be alive! I refilled my torpedo before starting the ascent to Hawi. I was climbing steadily, but heartrate was low: the first real sign that I was getting sick. Using a tip from a former coach, I had stashed several bottles of my own hydration mixed with mostly ice in my Special Needs bag. This had worked beautifully at IMFL in 2019 when it was 49 degrees at dawn, but the Kona sun had made them too hot to drink! I was back to grabbing the orange Gatorade (not my favorite), plus my reason for stopping at Special Needs was now moot. Oh well, live and learn.

I stayed in control on the downhill, sweated through a hot, stagnant stretch at the bottom of the mountain and looked forward to the cooling breeze to come on the Queen K. But that headwind had me riding several mph slower on the second half than I had all week. I had nothing to give. The gains I expected didn't materialize. It was a long slog and a mental challenge to push out the discouragement of an embarrassingly slow bike, but I was determined to have a positive experience!

I took extra time in T2, trying to cool down my face with icy towels. I probably had a fever by then but I looked forward to seeing my friends and family on the run. I had incredible dry-mouth in the first mile but I decided to smile and cheer and encourage everyone I encountered from that moment on. I wasn't fast on Ali'i but I held my own, fueled by the wonderful energy of every person lining the

route. I encountered so many friends there both racing and cheering, I'll never forget it.



In my twenty -previous IM brand races I had only walked once with a back problem. I had trained on hills to prepare for Palani Road, about seven miles into the run yet I found myself walking, just out of steam. Once on the Queen K I ran again for a mile or so and then felt I had nothing in the tank, despite sticking to my nutrition plan. I was honestly baffled by the extreme fatigue. My new mantra became “There’s no reason I can’t run right now,” which I repeated in my head as I ran slowly for as long as I could before I had to walk again.

It was my turn to come down with the flu. *How could I not know this, you ask?* Race day magic kept the coughing and congestion at bay until just after I finished (along with foul-smelling, green phlegm--yum!). I guess I wouldn’t let it into my consciousness, the kiss of death. (I was up most of the night, finally measuring my fever the next day, by which time six of us from our two condos had Influenza A.)

Back to the race! It got dark as I turned into the Energy Lab and my little running light died quickly. Man, it was black! The pavement was in bad shape so I had to be really careful not to trip. (Think IMFL when it went through the park, only worse!) I revised my idea of possible outcomes by calculating my fast-walking pace (15:00 pace) for the second half and then jogged enough to take off another couple of minutes per mile.

Mainly, I focused on what I could control. I thanked everyone I could. I even danced a bit with the volunteers! I dedicated each of the last ten miles to people who had taught, guided and inspired me, some living, some not. We runners all became quiet heading back on the Queen K; no more chatting. But each step was meaningful as I conversed with my heroes and angels in my head. My sister Alicia lent me her angel’s wings for the last mile and down Palani we flew! I felt no pain. I hugged my step-daughter, fist-pumped with friends, literally roared with my own personal cheerleaders and cried with joy as I landed in my husband’s arms. It was everything I’d imagined and so much more.

Looking back, I count it as a blessing that I wasn't obviously sick that morning or I may not have been able to start. Imagine that! Instead, I was forced to let go and just be grateful to be there. It was by far my longest and slowest race and very different from what I had envisioned for so long. But it was my race and I don't regret a single minute of it.



If you or one of your athletes is preparing to race the IMWC in Kona, here are few things I've learned.

Pre-race:

- * Arrive at least a week early if you can to 1) do the Ho'Ala practice swim on Sunday, 2) ride on the course, especially the section to Hawi and back and 3) acclimate to the heat and humidity.
- * Heart rate and pace will be inversely related at first (HR up, pace down) but that will change, given time and heat exposure.
- * Train at the time of day you'll race: Swim early, ride midday, run when it's hottest, not coolest!
- * Prepare for the salty water with Body Glide and use the shower on the pier afterwards
- * You may not have race-day access your gear bags. Be sure that your swim, bike and run kits and gear combinations truly work well together without chafing
- * Hydrate well and stay off your feet
- * If there's a chance you'll be running in the dark, especially in the Energy Lab, get a headlamp or running light and practice with it beforehand
- * Plan for high heat and practice for it. Do you need sleeves? A small towel for water? A hydration belt? Will that fit with your race belt?
- * Don't compare your taper-week stats or body fat to anyone else! Yes, everyone who has qualified deserves to be there. Sometimes legacy athletes underestimate what they have accomplished to earn their slot. So hold your head high and...
- * Soak in the amazing atmosphere!

Race Day:

- * The few porta-potties are also open to the public so don't hang around transition to find friends before using bathroom!
- * Pick a building or landmark to sight off of on the swim (like the boat on the way out and the King Kam Beach Hotel and gigantic inflated Muscle Milk bottle on the pier on the return!)
- * Stick with your hydration and nutrition plan or even get ahead on it a bit. Kona leaves no room for error here!
- * On the bike, watch the riders ahead of you to predict when a side wind is coming
- * Grip the bars gently on the descent (like cradling an egg). Watch for grass on the shoulder, and keep one hand ready to brake if needed. Always look back before pulling out to pass.
- * Keep an extra water bottle on the bike just to rinse off and pour on your head intermittently. I can't imagine getting through that bike without it.
- * Use every trick for heat on the run sunscreen, water on the head, ice under or a wet towel under the hat, wet sponges in the kit
- * Soak up the energy on Ali'i Drive! But...
- * Watch your pace and heart rate: there's still a lot of work ahead!
- * Don't get too attached to outcomes:
 - 1) Expect that you may finish significantly later than usual
 - 2) Develop lots of process goals, i.e., things you can control. Plan which songs to sing in your head, which mantras or prayers, which smaller goals to aim for (the next corner, seeing that person, etc.). Plan out the self-talk you'll use to combat that negative voice because it WILL find you at some point!
- * If you're struggling, do everything in your power to finish. You never want to wonder, "What if...?" This finish line is like no other!
 - * Most importantly, whatever happens or doesn't happen, don't let anything tarnish this incredible experience. Savor the honor of being there and have the time of your life!

**Anyone with questions about her training can reach Lorraine @
Empowertts@gmail.com.**

Adopt a Pro!

...but just for the weekend.

St. Anthony's Triathlon is so often the launch pad for the careers of many professional triathletes. But, until they start getting to the podium in their races, they have a lot of expenses with very little income.

This is where YOU can help.

By hosting a professional triathlete for the St. Anthony's Triathlon weekend you'll be helping them to keep their expenses low. But many have told me that with their constant travel, they do get tired of staying in hotels and really appreciate the interaction with others who appreciate the sport.

Responsibilities

The race organization will take care of getting the athlete from the airport to your home and will also get them back to the airport after the race. You may be able to help out by taking them to the grocery store. While they may love to sit down and have a meal with you, they often make their own meals, especially the evening before the race. If you live close to the race site (within 2 or 3 miles), that may be all you need to do. If you live further away, you may need to help them to get to the Saturday Pro meeting (although, even an Uber/Lyft would work).

Duration

Most of the athletes will arrive Thursday evening or Friday morning. Most will depart on Sunday evening or Monday morning.

Benefits

Most of these athletes use homestay programs whenever they can and are quite comfortable with this arrangement. This is a great opportunity for you to talk with these youngsters and get tips on training, nutrition, and conditioning. It's also good to just get to know them, how they are managing their careers, what their goals are, and so much more. Then, if you are like me, you'll eventually have a whole bunch of "kids" from all around the world!

If you are interested in hosting, please contact Carolyn Kiper at cskipper@gmail.com or call/text 727-459-8064.



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I have been practicing Personal Injury law in St. Petersburg, Florida, since the mid seventies. I have lived in this area all my life except my school years at the University of Notre Dame Law School. Our practice is dedicated to serving our clients in the areas of Personal Injury, Commercial Litigation, Contractual Disputes, and Premises Liability.

Retro Race Report For the Lohmans' First Race at Crystal River

The Crystal (Non)Vortex

I don't know if any of you have heard of the Crystal Vortex in Sedona, AZ. While on a road trip a number of years ago, we chanced upon the Red Rocks of Sedona, and decided to check out the renown Crystal Vortex there. Some believe this is a "portal for celestial and terrestrial spirits." We sat around, listened to flute music and thought spiritual thoughts for about 30 minutes. Sorry to report that we didn't encounter any aliens, ghosts or revelations about the meaning of the Universe during that visit.

Why did I bring this subject up? No, I haven't dabbled in peyote. In our constant quest for new triathlon venues, we have heard good things about the series of races at Crystal River -- perhaps we could even discover a Vortex there. Apparently, the town is one of the premier Manatee viewing areas. I just hope some yahoo doesn't mistake me for one and jump off his dock onto my back -- an event we recently witnessed on TV. I mean, what are these idiots thinking? Anyway, the three annual races take place around the Holiday weekends -- Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day. The course consists of a 1/4 mile swim, 15 mile bike and a 3 mile run (the latter two portions on hard surface). Entries are limited to 350, so it's a relatively small race. It is feasible to drive up there on race morning assisted by an early alarm clock, but we decided to drive a day early to scout the course.

It turns out the drive is around 2 hours -- 1:45 if you're traveling with Gail Danica Patrick Lohman. We headed over to recon the venue, but nothing was set up -- a true one day event.

We did notice a few interesting locals at the beach where we would be swimming the next day. A little boy told his mom that he had to go. Rather than direct him to the public bathroom about 50

feet away, she told him to just use the sand (right where the swim exit was located the next day). Moving right along.....we had a nice supper at a restaurant by the water where half the men were dressed like Kid Rock with torn off shirt sleeves and cowboy hats, and their dates were channeling Beth the Bounty Hunter -- enough said.

Race Day! We arrived about 30 minutes before the transition area was due to open. I strongly recommend this because parking is limited and late comers had to park on the road leading to the venue. Before the swim start we ran into Mad Dogs Don and Carol Ardell, Tom and Lindsay Bell, Park Alsop, Jennifer Hutchinson, Bob MacDonald, and Gary Bonacorsi. The swim venue is in a semi-protected beach area with no chop and only a small current, but the first and last 50 yards were in calf deep silt. The 7 waves averaged about 50-60 people each with 3 minutes between waves, resulting in minimum hand to hand combat. The bike and run courses are straight out and back on the slightly crowned but paved road. Although one would think that there would be some head ons with congruent courses, it all worked out fine. The road was also open to traffic, but everyone seemed to be courteous to the triathletes. Just past the halfway point on the bike I overtook a guy riding next to the yellow line. After several "on your lefts" and "please move right" were ignored, I rode by him on the right. He informed me that I was subject to a penalty for doing so. I thanked him, wished him a nice day and asked him if he had ever heard of blocking. So arrest me, USAT. As Alexander Pope said, "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Drink deep or taste not the Pierian Spring."

Jennifer Hutchinson and Park Alsop were the ones who originally recommended we try Crystal River. Post race, Don Ardell brought an interesting fact to my attention. The overall winner of the race was 51 year old Patrick High from Lake Placid, Florida, averaging

24.7 MPH on the bike and 5:49 minutes per mile on the run. Take that, Generation X! We thoroughly enjoyed meeting a large number of friendly folks at the race from other areas of the state. If any of you get tired of the local venues and want to expand your horizons, head up to Crystal River -- you may not find a Vortex, but you will have an enjoyable time.

Mad Dogs rule. Chuck Lohman



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Synergy was created by Stefan Laursen when he was 13 years old and needed a wetsuit to compete in his first triathlon. He couldn't afford to buy a suit, so he bought the materials and made his own at his Waldorf school. Therein began his love for the sport as he spent the next few decades innovating wetsuit designs.

At 16, Stefan turned professional and a few years later placed 2nd in the USA Professional USAT Championship. As other swimmers and professional athletes sought his wetsuits, Synergy has become an established brand whose primary vision is about inventing new technologies and designs that truly benefit athletes and elevate performance.

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