

## **Welcome to the 2015 YMCA Triathlon Training Program (YTri).**

This is our 15<sup>th</sup> year with this program. The basic point of the YTri program is to have fun – I think of it as an adult summer camp. The program is run and coached by volunteers who will be training for their own triathlons. We do this program because we love the sport and we love having the camaraderie of old friends and the joy of attracting new friends to the sport.

This year we will have a 19-week training program - beginning February 16 and continuing through June 26. The program is designed to help you train for the Philadelphia Triathlon on June 27th and 28th . Many of us will be training for other races during the year – some, like Lake Anna, Columbia, or Eagleman – will occur during the training period, before the Philly Tri.

### **Coaches:**

Your coaches this year are:

Swim: Sarah Edwards (H), Will Wagner, Mark Plotz, Greg Wing, Ingrid Orvedal, Lindsey Hyman, and Caron Whitaker.

Spin: Elynn Walter (H), Larry Atkins, Liz Goetz, and Sari Long.

Run: Dustin Renwick (H), Steve Laico, Jan Singelmann, Rhonda Sincavage, Tim Hughes, and Adrienne Brakefield,

### **Training**

Just a word about training to get started. I said we are here to have fun, and everyone – no matter what your athletic skill and experience coming into this program – is going to have our full support to reach your goals. We're making a commitment as your coaches. You have to make a commitment as well. This is not an exercise program and it is not a weight loss program. This is training. If you are going to participate, then you are going to participate fully. That is the commitment you are making.

This program is about discipline. It is about learning to read your body, understanding your body, controlling your body. Doing a triathlon takes the whole you. Yes, it involves physical strength, skill, endurance; but it is also involves mental and emotional strength and control. We'll train as a group and develop group spirit and have a lot of fun. But in the end, triathlon is an individual sport. It is all about setting your goals and attaining them – crossing that finish line with the sense of satisfaction knowing you have managed your body and your mind to accomplish something you never thought you could do. It is about you finding what you are made of, and reaching deeper into yourself, managing yourself physically and mentally. It is all about discipline. Some cold, dark winter morning, you will find it very hard to get out of bed and come here. But overcoming that takes the same discipline you will need to get into the water at the start of a race and start the swim – or pushing yourself when you have already been out there a couple of hours to take that next step – to put one foot in front of the other, and finish the race.

So we are serious about the commitment you are making and about our expectation as coaches that you will be here when you are supposed to be – on time – ready to go. That you will exercise the discipline to roll out of bed that cold, dark winter morning to get to the gym on time for your class.

I also want to emphasize that your coaches are all volunteers -- they are doing this for the love of the sport and to help you do your best. Please be considerate -- respect the fact that they are getting up early and taking time out of their busy lives to be here for you -- and please don't complain. If you have a problem, talk to your coaches about it or talk to me.

### **Weekly Training Schedule**

All of your basic training is in the morning between 6 and 8 am at the Y. We'll have 19 weeks of training – starting with a 6 week base-building period, followed by 8 weeks of building strength, speed, and endurance, intended to get you to your peak training for 4 weeks, and then a week of tapering before the Philly Tri.

In the first month of base building, each week you will have one assigned swim session, one assigned spinning session, and one assigned run. You can add on an additional spin or additional time in the pool.

In the building period, you will add a spinning or swimming session – taking you up to 4 days a week, with one day off. Plus a day on the weekend of bike or run either on your own or with the group. You will have the option of doing a 5<sup>th</sup> weekday if you choose, but you should plan on a day off a week – either weekday or weekend. You will increase intensity and distance during this period

At the peak you will be doing a full 6 days a week of either training here or on your own – holding your distances and intensity.

### **Swim**

Each of you doing coached swimming has been assigned to a swimming group with others who have a similar pace and skill level. Newbies and Vets are mixed together. Everyone will have one 55-minute coached swim practice a week. After the base-building is complete, you should try to be in the pool twice a week, swimming one-day-a-week on your own. There are workouts posted on the Google Group site, and more will be added this year.

Make sure you come to the pool with a bathing suit, swim cap (if your hair is long enough), goggles and a water bottle.

Just a word about swimming. You are assigned to a session, and you are expected to be at that session each week, unless something comes up that makes it impossible for you to

be there – serious or life threatening injury or illness, traveling out of town, or a conflict with work. We understand everyone will have a time or two they cannot make it. **Please try to contact your swim coach in advance to let your coach know you won't be there.** If you miss two practices without notice we will try to contact you. If you miss three, we will give your slot to someone else.

Your swim coaches donate their time to be here to help you improve your swimming – they are not getting any training themselves, they are standing on the deck. It is not rewarding to them to have one or two people show up.

In addition, we cause a lot of displacement in the pool taking up two lanes three mornings a week. If we cannot fill those lanes, we will give them back. It is not fair for other swimmers to have us block out lanes with one or two people in them when they are crowded into the rest of the pool. So when you don't show up, you are just hurting your colleagues in your swim group who may lose their lane.

We will have a couple of opportunities for weekend swim activity. There will be a stroke clinic in the pool on a weekend plus a few open water swims – one in the pool early in the season and three outdoors later on. You will hear more about this later.

### **Bike/Indoor Cycling**

Most of your bike conditioning will be in morning spin classes. There will be outdoor group bike rides to teach you biking and racing skills on the weekend when the weather gets warmer.

Newbies will have one assigned 45-minute spin practice each week Tuesday or Thursday morning at 6 a.m. in the Y's cycling gym on the fourth floor. Make sure you wear comfortable and breathable clothing. I recommend spandex cycling shorts – with the padding in the seat. If you have bike shoes and want to wear them for spinning you can change into them before the class. You do not need bike shoes, but they can help your training and performance on the bike. Bring a water bottle and a towel to class with you.

The workouts will build strength, pace or cadence, and intensity on the bike over the course of the training. Classes will take you over a variety of terrain – flat road, easy grades, steep hills – to help you build your quads and hamstrings and develop a smooth round pedaling stroke and a fast sprint.

Newbies have priority for the Tuesday and Thursday 6 a.m. cycling classes – Vets can use an empty bike if the class is not full at 6 a.m. Monday and Friday 6 am classes are open to all triathletes. Take advantage of these Monday and Friday spin classes - they are good for getting extra conditioning workouts and later in the season extra bricks. Once we get to the build phase, Newbies should try to add one other 45-minute spin class a week. In addition to the four 6 am triathlon classes, there are the regular Y classes at 7 am.

Once we get into the building phase, we will start “bricks,” where we spin for 45 minutes and get off the bikes, change into running shoes, and immediately start running for another half hour or so. All four 6 am classes will have bricks.

Those of you training for longer distance races or who just want the challenge of a longer spin class, Larry coaches a special intense 2-hour spin class on Monday mornings from 6 am to 8 am. You don't have to do the full 2-hour class on Monday. You can also spin at 6 am and then brick afterwards, or swim at 6 and come up to the spin room at 7 am. People who want to do a longer spin can also do a 6 am and a 7 am class the same day on Tuesday, Thursday or Friday. Liz coaches the 6 am Newby class and the regular 7 am Y class on Tuesdays.

Once it gets warm in mid-March we will have a bike group leaving from Pierce Mill in Rock Creek Parkway on Saturday mornings at 8 am. These rides will accommodate moderate and fast pace riders – no one will be left behind -- and will generally go about 25 to 30 miles. The first weekend we go out (March 21) will be an outdoor bike clinic for anyone who wants to learn how to use their bike and learn the basics of riding outside and riding in a group. The clinic will include a short ride. The regular outdoor rides will start the following Saturday

In addition to YTri weekend rides, there are also weekend groups that gather at The Bike Rack at 14<sup>th</sup> and Q on Saturday and Sunday mornings and go about 30 to 40 miles. That tends to be a faster paced ride with a pace line, but no one is left behind.

Also, The Bike Rack will conduct bike maintenance clinics for YTri. We have two this year - one in early March and the other in early April. You should plan to do one of these – or another of the bike maintenance clinics The Bike Rack conducts. The bike clinic is designed to help you get more comfortable with changing a tire or making other small repairs on the fly.

In May, we will start doing outdoor bricks at Hains Point. These bricks are a 25-mile outdoor ride followed by a 6-mile run. There is also a shorter Sprint distance brick possible. We will do 3 bricks before the race. The first outdoor brick will start with a mandatory tire change – so make sure you have figured out how to change a tire before then.

## **Run**

Runs will leave from the YMCA lobby at 6:15 in the morning on Tuesdays and Thursdays. You have been assigned to one of those days. Please plan to be in the lobby before 6:15 a.m. – as the running group will leave on time. Running routes will be e-mailed out to running group members before the runs.

Run training will consist of hill runs and rolling and flat surfaces, with plyometrics and speed work included. Running practice will start in base building with about 4 miles of running and occasional running drills and plyometrics. The runs will build distance and

pace over time. The groups will start out together. Each run will have two or more coaches, so no one will be left behind.

All runs will be outside. Make sure you have a good pair of running shoes that are not too badly worn. During the winter, you need to bring adequate warm clothing, gloves and hats. If weather is brutal, the run coaches will arrange for drills in the gym on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor.

### **Mock Tri**

The mock triathlon is scheduled for Saturday April 25th. The swim part of the triathlon will occur before the YMCA opens and anyone else has access to the pool. The Mock Tri will include a swim portion in the pool, a transition on the pool deck, a specified time period for a spin up on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor, another transition, and an outdoor run of about 6 miles. You will have a chance to gauge your physical and mental conditioning, but also to walk through the mechanics of doing a triathlon so you can learn some of the tips and get comfortable with the mechanics before you have to actually do a race.

### **Clinics**

We sponsor a lot of free clinics with this training program and I encourage everyone to take advantage of as many of them as possible. These are all on the calendar. We will start with a Bike 101 and Equipment Clinic at 6:30 pm Thursday, February 19th -- to learn the basics about buying a bike and other equipment you may or may not need. Our sponsor Sport and Spinal will host an Injury Prevention Clinic at their clinic at 7 pm on Tuesday, February 24th to help you learn the things you can do to avoid injury as you ramp up your training. We will have an in-pool open-water swimming clinic on Saturday morning, March 7 to go over the basics of open-water swimming before you actually swim outdoors. We may also try to fit in one or two Saturday afternoon stroke (swimming) clinics during the season. We will have two bike maintenance and tire changing clinics (one in March and one in April) hosted by our sponsor The Bike Rack. As I mentioned, we will have an outdoor bike handling clinic on March 21. There will also be a hill bike-riding clinic April 18, and a Transition and Nutrition Clinic April 16th (before you do the Mock Tri). These are all on the YTri Calendar -- so make sure you get them on your calendar.

### **Uniforms**

We have a specially designed competition Sugoi uniform to wear when you race on behalf of the National Capital Y. At the Philly Tri it looks great to have 50 to 80 Y-Triers dressed in team colors. These uniforms are top quality triathlon-specific racing gear. You will wear it under the wetsuit and then just peel the wetsuit off and continue racing in your uniform.

We have order forms for the uniforms and will need to have you fill one out and return it with your check later in February. We need to get the orders in if we are going to use the

uniforms for any of Spring/summer races. You want to be careful about sizes – make sure you get them large enough – for some reason these usually come too small.

We will start taking orders soon – so that we can get them back in time for our races. Look for an announcement about uniform orders, and try to get them back quickly.

## **Equipment**

Those of you who have not done a triathlon before will have questions about what equipment to buy for your first race. Like a lot of sports these days, there is a lot of triathlon equipment and you can go broke outfitting yourself with all the coolest gear. It is advisable to take it easy and get by with a minimum of stuff until you finish a race and are sure you want to do a lot of triathlon.

The basics are: swimsuit, goggles, cap, and water bottle for swimming; bike shorts, t-shirt, a water bottle for indoor cycling and helmet and bicycle for outdoors; and running shorts and top and shoes for running (with jacket, trousers, gloves and hat for winter running). Road bikes are preferable to hybrids, but you can do a race in a hybrid if that is what you have. If you don't have a bike, figure on spending up to \$1,000 for an entry-level road bike.

First year add-ons may include: bike shoes and “clipless pedals”, a wetsuit, aerobars for your bike. You will learn more at the Bike 101 Clinic next week. Talk to the Vets and to the coaches about what you need and where to get it.

## **Communication**

Google Group - YTriDC2015 -- Everyone will become a member of the YTriDC2015 Google Group and will be set up to get notifications about the program through the listserv. All the forms, information sheets, training schedules, and other materials handed will be in Google Docs on the site for downloading, as well as the running routes and swim workouts. Also, there are a lot of training tips posted out there – hydration and nutrition in both training and on race day, a race day checklist, etc. More material will be added.

The listserv is there for you to communicate with the rest of the group about triathlon matters. Be judicious in sending messages through the listserv, though. There is nothing worse than having your inbox fill with tons of YTri e-mails going back and forth, that “cc” everyone in the group.

I send out a Weekly Update -- usually on Sunday evenings -- with all the upcoming week's events and other things you need to know. They can be lengthy due to the amount of activity that will be going on; but I highly recommend that you read them. Some people set their receipt on daily digest rather than as they come out and have been known to miss events that were noticed in the Weekly Update.

YTriYNot.Org Website -- The website will be kept up to date with upcoming events and the calendar. We use the site primarily to provide information about the program to the general public. We do not put a lot of detailed training information out there. Still, there will be some information you will want to access on that site.

Facebook: YTri 2015 YMCA National Capital Triathlon Team -- Updated information about the program, pictures, and conversation about the program get posted by members on our Facebook page. Make sure you sign up to stay on top of what is going on with YTri.

## **Happy Hours**

We will have a happy hour every month on the second Tuesday of the month, starting at 6:00 pm. This is a great opportunity for us to get together socially as a group, to get to know some of the people in other swim, bike and run groups, and build team spirit. I hope you will all make an effort to get to these. We will let you know details on where and when. The first one is next Tuesday night -- February 17th - be sure to come.

## **The Race**

The race this year is the TriRock Philadelphia Triathlon - Olympic distance on Sunday, June 22nd. There is also a Sprint distance race at Philly on Saturday, June 27th. We will coordinate transportation to Philly, hotel rooms, the pre-race dinner, and other aspects of the race weekend. Most of the team will get hotel rooms and be there for both days.

You should sign up for this race soon before it fills up. Go to: <http://trirock.competitor.com/philadelphia>. Make sure you include on the form that you are on the National Capital YMCA Triathlon Team. There are other triathlons many of us will be doing that are still open and we can help you get signed for one of those. We will post a list of the most popular Sprint, Olympic and Half-Ironman races on the Google Group site.

This year, a lot of the YTri group are going to do either the Kinetic Sprint or Half-Ironman race at Lake Anna, Virginia - May 9th and 10th. We encourage Newbies who want to get in a short practice triathlon before Philly to do the Kinetic Sprint. It is a great course. We will be organizing some kind of group housing for the weekend and transportation to the race. We will have more information on this race weekend soon.

## **Conclusion**

Finally, go to your coaches if you have questions on training – or turn to me if you have other issues you need addressed.

Take this program seriously. Make the time commitment. Become part of the team. Put everything you have physically and mentally into training – then feel the tremendous rush of finishing your first race.