

The Loop

Ancient City Road Runners

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Tri, Tri, Tri Again

Summer. For ordinary people, summer is the season of prime relaxation—lounging on the beach or floating on a pool raft, or watching a movie in air-conditioned comfort. For the ACRR, summer is the season to go all out. Quite a few of our members have recently tested their mettle through the rigors of the triathlon. Here are a handful of their tales of skill, stamina, determination, and triumph.

My Triathlon Story...

Triathlon is a natural fit for me. When I think back on it, my inclination for the sport started in my earliest years. When I was very young, my dad used to put me in a car seat mounted onto the back of his old red Raleigh. We toured the countryside discovering wild-life, nature and great bakeries.



As I grew older, I swam competitively, a path that nearly led me to a college career in swimming. During my years of competitive swimming, I was introduced to the world of triathlon, as there were a handful of elite and pro triathletes who practiced with our team. The most notable was Heather Gollnick, who is now a 5-time Ironman champion.

My passion for swimming began to fade in high school, though, and I burned out on the sport. Before my last race ever as a competitive swimmer, I broke down in tears behind the starting blocks and had the worst race of my entire career. I couldn't take the pressure, and it had been years since I had fun racing.

I went on several recruiting trips, but in my heart, I knew my swimming career was over. I had completely lost the passion to compete. Then, I changed my sights to triathlon. A new challenge, a new sport, and new opportunities. I was going to be going to the University of Wisconsin Madison in fall, and I couldn't wait to join their triathlon team.

The July before my freshman year, my dad took me to buy my first real bike. Our local bike shop owners just happened to have the perfect bike in stock for me—accidentally ordered and too small to fit anyone else but me. I remember that exhilarating feeling of flying down the road for the first time, almost out of control. I was in love! I still have my old blue trek that I ride occasionally, a reminder of my roots and my love for the sport.

When I joined the UW's triathlon and cycling teams, I found my home. I learned so much

from the varied experiences of my teammates—fast runners, ex-collegiate swimmers, Cat 1 cyclists, and even a few successful Ironmen. The worst part was running. I got dropped every single run. For almost an entire year, I made it my mission to hang on as long as I could. After many long and painful runs, I eventually kept up.

I finally traveled with my team to my first race. I remember getting out of the water first and hearing the crowd cheering that I was the first woman. I got on my blue trek and flew through the beautiful countryside of Wisconsin, in the lead and riding fast. I had never had a more fulfilling moment in sport in my whole life. I was hooked. I came in second overall that day, far exceeding my expectations. I found out that, for some reason unknown to me, I was able to run well off the bike. In fact, I could run faster off the bike than I could at just running a race alone!

My college career continued with many successful results. The highlight was coming in 12th overall female at collegiate nationals in a field of talented women, several of whom have become professional triathletes.

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Save the Date!

The first annual **Pink up the Pace 5K** run/walk will be held on 26 September at 8am. Participants will start at the Visitor Center, travel along the Bayfront, swing through Lincolnville and downtown, and finish with a dash down St. George Street.

Proceeds from the race, which is the brainchild of Cindy Ortiz, will go to help underserved women in the community face the financial challenges of breast cancer.

Watch the ACRR bulletin board for updates.

C'mon, everyone! It's time to Pink up the Pace!

More Stories from Idaho...

I have continued to enjoy competing in triathlons over the past 9 years. I have had many successes (qualifying for Hawaii and the 70.3 world championships, neither of which I went to, a regret to this day) and many hardships to overcome. But triathlon has continued to be a constant in my life. Every finish is an accomplishment, every race a journey.

On June 21st, I competed in the Ironman in Coeur d'Alene, placing 444 over-

all in a field of about 2100 competitors. I was the 37th female out of about 700, and the 7th in my age group out of 79. My time was 11:22:16, just shy of what I needed to qualify for Hawaii, which is my ultimate dream.

This year I've also done 2/3 bfast series races and placed second overall in both. I was supposed to do the Marineland race but got hit by a car the day before. For the rest of the summer, I'm racing the Hammerhead Olympic triathlon and the Augusta 70.3 (Half Ironman)

in September.

I've been a competitive athlete my entire life, but no sport has ever given me the sustained joy and feeling of success and accomplishment as triathlon. If you are ever feeling frustrated with your progress in running, give triathlon a try. It will make you a faster runner and better overall athlete, and you may rediscover the joy of competing.

—Libby Bergman

It's all Derek's fault. That's how I am starting my Ironman story. If you are reading this story in hopes of gaining some helpful training tips or perhaps some intelligent insight into the world of endurance racing, stop reading. I was born at a very early age, but this is not a story about my childhood. I am the oldest of three children, all born a year in a half apart. But this is not a story about my parents' questionable sanity, although I thank God they were with me in Idaho; funeral arrangements are much easier on-site. I am part of the ACRR, arguably the least important part, and without them I would never have made it to the start line, but this is not a story about the ACRR. My name is Sally Howes and this is my story.

Years ago, when fire was new and exciting, I competed in local triathlons during the off-season from UMASS running. Tri technology was primitive at best—think *Breaking Away* and you would be right. I was a big fish in a small pond and due to that fact alone, won easily. So I thought I would like to do the big one...The Ironman. So here I am 20 years later, 3 weeks post Ironman, and it still seems inconceivable. Yes, that word does mean what I think it means.

When I think about my Ironman experience, the first thing I think about is that I cheated; I had help. My mother and the HGC, thinking my mono diagnosis was a potential death sentence, had over 50 people praying for me. If you have never had someone pray for you, you are missing out. I have to say that because of it I had the best time (not the fastest time); other than the swim and mile 18 of the run, I enjoyed every minute of it. The last 5 miles were incredible. I had the last quarter mile to myself, after I pushed aside two stragglers, and I couldn't stop smiling. Everything was beautiful, and I really did want world peace.

Secondly, I am thankful. I am thankful to my parents who drove all the way from Florida to be there; my training partners (in alphabetical order): Barbara, Craig, Derek, Erin, Frieda, Jessica (2), JC (along with midget, lesleigh, joy), Justin, Libby, Peyton, and Top; with additional emotional support provided by the HGC, OFC and SCC (including Renee), Craig, and my small group Bible study. I am also very thankful to my sister and her kids who prayed for me and wanted to wait up until I finished (not sure that was entirely for my

benefit). My niece's specific prayer was that I would have the courage to stop if I declined medically (although I'm not sure the last two words are a direct quote).

Thirdly, I think about how logistically difficult this event is. I won't call it a race only because I didn't feel I raced it. It made running feel so vanilla ice cream in comparison to rocky road. For a small-brained person such as myself, there is a lot of simultaneous thinking and not thinking involved. To successfully prepare what is needed for 3 different endurance sports, nutrition, and weather is and was difficult. The importance of practicing the above during every training run is crucial. For example, I had never swum in a wetsuit in open water before. To be honest, neoprene and I will never have a love affair; it's too confining.

Lastly, there are some things I learned along the way that will probably never be useful to anyone but me, but who knows.



All I needed to know, I learned from Ironman

1. If you are going down, don't take others down with you.
2. It's not nice to spit into the wind when people are right behind you (peeing is frowned upon as well).
3. Port-a-potties are not bike friendly (i.e. there are no take-backsies – the john keeps all it claims).
4. No matter how crappy you feel there is always someone who looks as crappy as you feel.
5. Neither size or fancy equipment matters.
6. Everyone needs verbal encouragement.
7. Peanut butter and jelly really are the nectar of the gods.
8. Use clear creams.
9. There is no safe place from pick up artists. Try not to look like the weak one that strayed from the herd.
10. Never write yourself off. Ever.

—Sally Howes

Ironman—“Swim 2.4 miles, bike 112 miles, run 26.2 miles....Brag the rest of your life.” This was the motto inscribed on the first Ironman entry forms in 1978.



Knowing the history behind those words sends chills down my spine, but it does nothing to describe what it took for me to become an Ironman. It should have read swim 15,000 meters, bike 100-200 miles, run 50-70 miles all in one week while balancing work, girlfriend,

illness, and fatigue. And then do it all over and over for 30 weeks in a row.

June 21st 2008 was the day I signed up for the 2009 Coeur d'Alene Ironman Triathlon. This would be a day that would change the rest of my life and test every limit of my body, mind, and personal relationships. Over the next year, I would spend countless hours alone—early mornings, late evenings, and long weekends training my body to be able to take the abuse of such a long distance endurance race.

The Ironman is about learning one's body and nutritional needs more than anything else. I started this lesson by running the Chicago Marathon in October 2008. This was my first lesson in proper hydration. I went into Chicago knowing my fitness was strong and dreaming of a BQ. Well...mile 19 hit and the cramping started, and I was forced to limp across the finish in 4:06. I have to admit the feeling of that race almost scared me into giving up my Ironman dream. However, the feeling of despair didn't last long. Moments after getting to my bag, I noticed I had received numerous text messages of

encouragement from ACRR. One was from Todd telling me to forget about it and run the Jacksonville Marathon, and he would get me there. Knowing I wasn't going alone gave me the strength and confidence to try again.

I would spend the next 10 weeks mirroring ACRR members and running as many group runs as I could. Over those 10 weeks I would shatter PRs in 5K, 10K, 15K, and half-marathon distances. SUCCESS! I ran 3:15 in Jacksonville and gained the confidence I needed to continue with Ironman training.

As the Ironman training continued, so did my marriage with the ACRR, with the same great results in triathlon. I would go on to learn many more lessons in 30 weeks about nutrition, illness prevention, bike cadence, run form, race attire, needed race calories. The list is endless.

Two events—the Marineland Olympic Distance Triathlon (2:10, placing 2nd overall with a PR of 20 minutes) and the Pineapple Man Sprint (1:13, placing 3rd in age with a PR of 5 minutes) are amongst my proudest moments.

June 21st, 2009 was a day for me to reflect on all that was gained and all that was lost during my journey. Funny, looking back I couldn't even tell you my favorite part of the actual race. The gun went off for the mass swim start, and it felt like salmon swimming upstream for 1hr and 14 minutes. The bike was 8:08 of calorie counting. And the marathon flew by in 4:16. For most of the race, I was perfectly happy sitting at a heart rate somewhere between 120-140 bpm. I wanted to make sure that I crossed 140.6 with a smile on my face. 13hrs 54min and 26 seconds with a smile!!! ☺ Perfect

All though my time wasn't what I was hoping for, the experience was all that I ever dreamed it could be. In less than one year, I went from 4:06 in the Chicago Marathon to IRONMAN, finishing with a 4:16 marathon. I am excited for what life brings next. VIVA ACRR.

—James Resor

The Oldest City Challenges One of Its Youngest Athletes

Hey, everyone! As many of you know, I recently completed my first triathlon at the Galimore Center. The race was a 75-yard swim, followed by a 2-mile bike ride, and ending with a 1-mile run. (This was for my age group; distances varied depending on age.) I have a funny story to share: So, there were these 2 guys in line behind me who were going on and on about how they were going to win the whole triathlon. So, it turns out that once we reached the run, I lapped them twice and they would start running whenever they saw me coming up behind them. I guess that's just another typical guy story!

I believe that though the majority of the kids weren't smiling towards the

end, this was a great experience because it enables kids to get out and be active. There was an awesome turnout, and all of the



proceeds went to the Children's Museum of St. Johns, which is an interactive museum where kids can let their imaginations run wild!

Having completed one myself, I strongly

encourage triathlons. If you haven't done one, go sign up! Triathlons allow you to shine at your best event, but also allow you to try to get better at your least favorite event. For example, swimming is my sport, and this weekend I realized that I need to brush up on the running skills. (I am probably taking a risk saying that to a running club!)

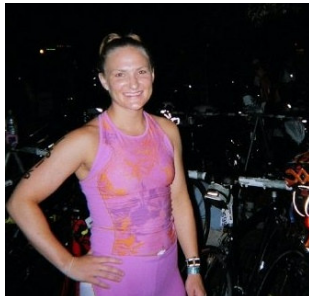
All in all, this was an awesome little event to raise money for such an amazing cause. While I won't be able to do this triathlon next year due to age limits, I am looking forward to doing others in the future. Thanks to the club for all of your support! Luv ya. ☺

—Devin Floyd

I AM HALF IRON...MAN!

It all started just over a year ago in Orlando while I was watching my friend's son compete in the Florida 70.3 Ironman. At that point, I had only recently begun cycling and had never swum a lap in a pool. As I watched the event, I was incredibly inspired by the perseverance that the athletes displayed as they looped around the run course 1... 2... 3 times in the oppressive heat of midday central Florida. I decided that day that I was no longer happy with my duathlete status and made it my goal to become a triathlete and complete that same half-Ironman the next year.

I soon found out that St. Augustine is very accommodating for "wanna-be" multi-sport athletes. I was quickly filtered into the local Master's swim team (I only cried the first two workouts!). Through the feedback and encouragement of the other team members, I was able to gain confidence to begin registering for sprint and Olympic triathlons.



Amazingly, swimming has now become my favorite leg of triathlon!

There is no shortage of opportunities to cycle in this town, either. Almost any given night/morning, there is a group ride going on in the shores, North A1A, along the river, World Golf Village, wherever. Before I moved to St. Augustine, I had a road bike but only used it to navigate the city streets of Philadelphia as my main method of transportation. When I moved here, with the help of some new friends, I was able to

transform my hunk of aluminum, hobby road bike into, well... a hunk of aluminum with nicer wheels and water bottle holders. I finally upgraded my aluminum mess to a gloriously light carbon fiber frame in preparation for the 70.3.

Despite being part of the most wonderful running club on the planet, running remains the biggest struggle for me during triathlons. I try to prepare by always running at least a few miles after each training ride, but what it really comes down to is sheer perseverance and the will to put one foot in front of the other.

I finally did achieve my goal of completing the Half-Ironman in Orlando this past May. Finishing my first 70.3 was surprisingly emotional for me. It is one of the few races that you can't really fake, and as I crossed the finish, I truly felt like I had accomplished something.

—Amy Michie

Mm, Mm, Good!

Memorial Day dawned with the 3rd Annual Mickler Mile—a mile of asphalt, sweat, panting, and straining muscles, followed by miles and miles of smiles, as you can see by the group photo. Many thanks to Jay and Shelby Decker for putting on this much-loved event!



And Father's Day weekend saw the ACRR's second trip to Conyers, GA for Muddy Buddy, a messy manifestation of running, cycling, and assorted acrobatic mayhem. Four ACRR teams competed—Soup/Sandwich Returns (Ron Langdon and Grant Misterly), Dude, Run (Mike and Ryan Cullum), Black Dog (David and Leah Beck), and Fix It! (Amy Michie and Dave Boyle). Jessica Misterly was the group's official photographer. Go teams!



The Cross-training Corner

“I’ve Got a Need for Speed”

So maybe a cheesy line from Top Gun may not be the best heading, but it is accurate in describing the runners that are showing up at the track every Thursday night.

Speed work is integral for getting faster. It does not matter if you run a sub 5-minute mile or a 10-minute mile, to take it to the next level you will need to incorporate speed work in your training schedule.

Even if you are not competing, speed work will improve your body's aerobic capacity, which means you will burn oxygen more efficiently, which in turn will assist you in all of your running.

Speed work is not easy; it will tax the body and mind, but the benefits far outweigh the discomfort.

The club meets at St. Augustine High School virtually every Thursday night at 5:30 (some come a little later due to their work schedule). Our workout begins with a warm-up and stretching, continues with the actual speed intervals, and finishes with a cool down. Since it is a workout that should be tailored to your specific goals and ability, we can help you if you want assistance or recommendations.

Join us each Thursday, and you will be able to quench your “need for speed.” See you at the track.

—David Beck

“It does not matter if you run a sub 5-minute mile or a 10-minute mile, to take it to the next level you will need to incorporate speed work in your training schedule.”



In Her Shoes...

...as in the saying “you can’t understand someone unless you run a mile...” Jude Miller-Platko is our featured club member for this issue.

She may be a Yankee, but Jude’s no car-petbagger. She has brought nothing but wonderful things to St. Augustine and the ACRR.

Jude started running about 16 years ago, working her way up from a 2¼ mile stint around a school track to the 5-mile loop around North Park in Pittsburgh. Since those early days, Jude has run more races than she can count, but she does remember her impressive PRs for the 5K (21:30) and the marathon (3:45). The memory may falter, but the legs and lungs certainly don’t.

Her first marathon in Columbus, Ohio ranks as Jude’s best running experience. The weather was a perfect 39° degrees to start and then a sunny 54° throughout the race. That great first marathon led her to do a few more. Her worst experience? Boston Marathon 2004. They started it at 12:00, and it was 86 degrees. Coming from Pittsburgh and train-

ing in snow and 10 degree weather, Jude was not prepared for that hot, humid weather. She finished, but it was not pretty.

Jude is a personal trainer with a nutrition background. She has been able to help many in the club stay injury-free, train for different races, and become educated on proper nutrition, especially after a run or in training for a half and full marathon. Her advice, as a nutritionist, for other runners? Refuel right after the workout



carb-combina- as yogurt, chocolate wick, or cereal with a protein tion, such glass of milk, sand- bowl of with milk. The carbs refuel and the protein helps heal.

As a northerner whose favorite thing about running is “the wonderful people my husband and I have met,” it is only fitting that Jude is the founder of ACRR North, a group that meets every Saturday at 7am and rotates be-

tween three different sites: World Golf Village, Palencia, and Vilano. Jude and her husband Bill, also a runner, have been able to motivate a group of 47 runners from WGV, Palencia, Murabella, Sevilla, Heritage Landing, The Meadows, a few from developments off SR210 and off Rt1 by the airport. During the week, runners stay in their own developments and run with smaller groups early in the morning.

Jude started ACRR North because she belonged to a running group in Pittsburgh called Hot Harry's and enjoyed being part of a group with a common interest. Jude has gathered together a very diverse group of runners ranging in age from 24-65, some very experienced and other just starting out. They also love to socialize after the runs with either breakfast or coffee, and they try to have 2-3 socials each year.

The ACRR North group runs are posted on the club website, and Jude is planning to get together with the beaches group soon. Hmm, North meets South. Hmm... ©

—Judith Burdan



Ancient City Road Runners

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The **Ancient City Road Runners** are runners just like you who meet several times a week to... run. Fortunately, club members also tend to meet and gather for the social aspect, which is so well-deserved after spending so much time hitting the pavement together. **We run hard and have fun!**

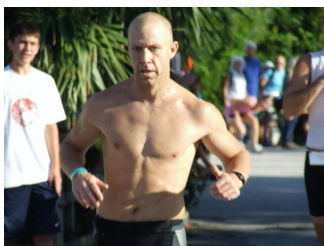
The ACRR started in 1982 when some like-minded people saw the need for a running club in our city. The club's constitution states:

"The prime object of this association shall be the promotion and encouragement of long distance running and the education of the public to its benefits."

This still rings true today as we volunteer our services in the timing and management of local races like the **Matanzas 5K**, raise money for St. Johns County high-school track and cross-country teams, and hold a running camp each summer.

ancientcityrr.org

And Now a Word From Our President...



Since the theme of this issue's newsletter is triathlons I would like to first congratulate

Libby Arnold, Sally Howes, and James Resor on completing the Coeur d'Alene Ironman this past June. I am sure you guys are an inspiration to many of our members for your exercise of dedication and resolve to complete such a grueling

training schedule and, of course, the race itself!

I would highly recommend that if you have not participated in a triathlon to consider this an option. For me, it has been a nice break from the daily pounding and, at times, monotony of running mile after mile. Not to mention that I feel that I am in better shape as a whole since I am training muscle groups that tend to be ignored when I am exclusively running. If you are interested in participating in triathlons, there are many members of the club that will be more than happy to guide you

through the training and race prep to complete your first triathlon!

On a different note, I would like to invite you to the club's summer social being held on August 1 at the St. Augustine Beach Pier Pavilion starting at 1pm. Just bring a food dish and yourself, and we will take care of the rest! Also, keep an eye on our bulletin board at www.ancientcityrr.org for postings about impromptu daily group runs and details about future local races.

—Justin Breidenstein