

FOUR WEEKS OF LIVING LIKE
AN IRONMAN



IRONMAN[®]



IRONMAN : FOUR WEEKS OF LIVING LIKE AN IRONMAN

The Coaches at IRONMAN U have put together this “Live Like an IRONMAN” Programme. In this programme, we will outline what a first month of training can look like and give you some tips on how you can prepare your body, mind and life schedule for the journey ahead.

LET’S GET TO KNOW WHO YOU ARE TODAY: WARNING, THIS MAY JUST GET YOU INSPIRED.

The path to IRONMAN is different for everyone, but everyone should take these four steps to start their journey. Progress comes with consistency, consistency starts here.

STEP 1: SEE A PHYSICIAN

If you have not had your annual visit yet, do it. Your doctor is like another coach on your team – they need to know your goals. Look them in the eye and let them know that you plan to cross the IRONMAN Finish line this year! You will leave with confidence in your body and maybe a few things that should be addressed as you prepare for this journey.

STEP 2: GET TO KNOW YOU, THE TRIATHLETE

Take a moment and rate your swim, bike and run. On a scale of 1-5 where do you rate in fitness and proficiency for each sport? Where are you great and what are your limiters? Limiters are those things that stand in between you and your goal. For an athlete looking to complete their first IRONMAN, your limiter may be the open water swim. For an experienced athlete, you may find that hills on the bike is your challenge.

Worksheet 1: Rate Your Current State in Each of the Triathlon Sports

SPORT	1-5	WHY
Swim		
Bike		
Run		



STEP 3: FLIP THE SCRIPT

Take your limiters, change the word to GOAL. Your GOAL is to become a proficient open water swimmer! Your GOAL is to become a hill crushing machine on the bike! These are the first steps toward your short-term goals for the season. Put these goals eight weeks out on your calendar – we will check in on them later.

STEP 4: BEGIN TO BUILD A PLAN

The programme below begins with the important first steps of organising your life and schedule around a new training regimen. This is a critical piece of IRONMAN Training and will set you up for success.

LET'S GET TO KNOW YOUR TEAM: YOU ARE NEVER REALLY ALONE WHEN YOU TRAIN FOR AN IRONMAN.

One of the great parts of your IRONMAN journey is the ability to learn as you get fit. This programme is one piece of the puzzle, but we strongly encourage you to seek guidance from those athletes and coaches that have been on this journey and can help you truly customise this experience to your life and to your neighbourhood.

WORKSHEET 2: IDENTIFY YOUR RESOURCES

Who do you know has completed an IRONMAN?

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Where will you do the following activities?

SWIM	BIKE	RUN

CONSIDER A COACH

Our IRONMAN U Certified Coaches are professional coaches that have gone through a rigorous Certification Programme developed by IRONMAN. We are confident in their ability to provide a great training environment and many of our coaches are happy to provide a free consultation to get you started. You can find your certified coach [HERE](#)

CONSIDER A TRICLUB

Meeting with a group or a friend for a workout is an incredible way to stay on track. It may be hard to get out of bed, but sharing the post-workout endorphins will keep you coming back for more. Our clubs are a part of the IRONMAN `Ohana ("family" in Hawaiian) and a cornerstone in our community. Sharing your experiences with a group is one of the best parts of the IRONMAN Journey. IRONMAN Triclubs can be found [HERE](#)



LET'S GET TO KNOW THE PATH TO YOUR DESTINATION: FITTING IRONMAN TRAINING INTO REAL LIFE.

It is not the physical challenge alone that makes an IRONMAN Finish Line Special. It is the journey – the friends, the miles, the skills and the person you become as you tick off achievement after achievement – that will make that finish line a part of your life forever. Your most critical skill – finding a life balance that allows you to train is our first step. Skilfully navigating – work, time and family – will make that finish line even sweeter. Let's look at the pathways to weave the IRONMAN lifestyle into your daily routine without making a mess.

WORKSHEET

RACE DATES:

When do you want to race? Pick two events that you are excited about and list them here. Be sure to write in the dates and location and add one day prior to prepare for the race and one day after to celebrate.

RACE NAME	RACE DATE	LOCATION

BIG DATES:

Do you have big events coming up in your life? Weddings, vacations, major work deadlines? Please list them here. Remember, every challenge presents an opportunity, so these busy weeks will become recovery weeks to allow your body to absorb the training load.

WHAT	WHEN	WHERE

WEEKDAYS

What is your schedule like each week? Are you a morning person? Do you have a family dinner? Is there one day each week that is always packed from hour to hour?

Enter your typical Daily Schedule below: Download Table [here](#)

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<i>Example</i> 6AM Wake Up 8AM At Work 5PM Leave Work 6PM Dinner 7PM Kids Event						



WEEK 1: LET'S LOOK AT THE CLOCK

As we prepare you to begin this journey, it is critical to take your first four weeks of training as an opportunity to practice patience and to experiment with the schedule and training that you can commit to, as well as successfully prepare you for race day. Take notes every day, keep track of the questions you have and we'll talk about where to get them answered in Week 4!

Please note, we are not looking for specific workouts right now. Spin class, a run or hike with a friend, a swim lesson: these are all you need to start building a great habit of exercise.

COACH SAYS:	TRAINING SESSIONS:	WORKOUT OF THE WEEK:	TROUBLE SHOOTING:
<p>Make a Plan and stick to it. This is week 1. Enter your training events into your calendar as if they are meetings that cannot be missed. Allow 15 minutes to get to the workout and 20 minutes after the workout to shower and get to your next event of the day.</p> <p>Workouts do not have to be long or intense this week, they need to get done!</p>	<p>Wake up the right muscles. Build consistency into your movement patterns. Even an experienced athlete needs to get back on the bike and in the pool and spend 3-4 weeks getting their "feel" back.</p> <p>"Off the couch": Workouts of your Choice (total of 2.5 hours of training)</p> <p>"Feeling fit": 1 Swim / 1 Bike / 1 Run (total of 3 hours of training)</p> <p>"I was born for this": 2 Bikes, 2 Runs, 1 Swim (total of 4.5 hours of training)</p>	<p>Out and Backs. Running and workouts that focus on time. Go for a short period of time out in one direction, then return back along that same route. Rest at the start mark and repeat.</p> <p>Great Workout for All Levels: Warm up with 10 minutes at an easy effort to a starting point. Begin your main set as 3 x 8 Minutes of Out and Back Running. 4 minutes out, turn around and run 4 minutes back to the start. Rest for 1-2 minutes between efforts.</p> <p>Purpose: Understand your pacing and fitness. Try to hit the finish on the back portion of each run at exactly four minutes. That's perfect pacing!</p>	<p>I can't swim!</p> <p>Solution: Find a coach.</p> <p>This is not a roadblock, this is an opportunity. Swimming is a life skill and it's the most incredible gift you can give yourself. Any time spent learning to swim is also getting you incredibly fit – even a 30 minute lesson is going to challenge your fitness.</p> <p>Bonus - Not only will you complete an IRONMAN, but that beach vacation is going to be SO much cooler next year.</p>



**WEEK 2:
I'M FEELING IT, THAT SORENESS WILL
GO AWAY....RIGHT?**

The amazing reality about IRONMAN race day is that when you arrive on the beach and look around, you will see athletes that have come from all over the world and represent every size, shape, and age group. Our motto is that "Anything is Possible" and we live by those words. Enter week two looking for areas to improve, not judging each workout as a performance.

ADVICE / OPENER	TRAINING FOCUS	QUICK START WORKOUT	TROUBLESHOOTING:
<p>Coach Says:</p> <p>To get faster, you've got to move faster. Period.</p> <p>Check out this week's speed skills workout.</p>	<p>Training Sessions: Just a bit more this week. Let's test the schedule and the body.</p> <p>"Off the couch": 4 Workouts of your Choice / 1 must be a Triathlon Sport (Total of 3 hours of training)</p> <p>"Feeling fit": 1 Swim / 1 Bike / 2 Runs (Total of 3.75 hours of training)</p> <p>"I was born for this": 2 Bikes, 2 Runs, 2 Swims (Total 5.5 hours of training)</p>	<p>Workout of the Week</p> <p>Speed Skills Speed is hard if you don't know how to produce it. The simplest way to go faster is to move faster, so training a slight increase in cadence in all three sports is what we call a "Speed Skill".</p> <p>No matter what your workout is this week, add 10 x :15-20 seconds of higher cadence work. That means faster leg turnover during the run and the bike and quicker hips / arm turnover on the swim. Allow 2-3 minutes of gentler movement between intervals.</p>	<p>I don't have a bike!</p> <p>Spin to win. You will need a bike to complete this race, but if you are just getting started, the most important thing is to gain fitness and get moving. A spin class is as close as you are going to get to riding if you don't have a bike. Give it a try ; if you hate it, you'll be motivated to get that bike sooner than you planned. If you are in the market for a bike, see our bike buying tips at the end of this programme.</p>



WEEK 3:

“I’M FEELING IT...AND IT FEELS GOOD!”

Fitness happens over 6 weeks, but you can still feel great this week. Your body learns first, so you are starting to get more comfortable with the movements, whether that’s a beginner getting comfortable running or an experienced athlete finding accelerated skills in the pool or in on the bike. Repetition encourages your body to learn, so make sure you are moving well and finding success.

ADVICE / OPENER	TRAINING FOCUS	QUICK START WORKOUT	TROUBLESHOOTING:
<p>Coach Says:</p> <p>Go for it. Yes, it’s only week 3, but that doesn’t mean you have to hold back. Feeling strong? Pick up the pace. Feeling the flow? Extend that interval a bit further.</p>	<p>Training Sessions: Same number of sessions, but we’ll look at increasing some of the intensity this week.</p> <p>“Off the couch”: Workouts of your Choice / must be a Triathlon Sport (Total of 3 hours of training)</p> <p>“Feeling fit”: 1 Swim / 1 Bike / 2 Runs (Total of 3.75 hours of training)</p> <p>“I was born for this”: 2 Bikes, 2 Runs, 2 Swims (Total 5.5 hours of training)</p>	<p>Workout of the Week</p> <p>The Negative Split The negative split is positively a game changer. Simply stated, a negative split is going faster in the second half of your interval than you went at the beginning.</p> <p>Let’s look at the Out and Backs you did in Week #1. Let’s do it again, but this time, rather than trying to get back to the start point in the same amount of time, let’s try to get through that point. Can you go 500 or 1500 feet further?</p>	<p>I bought a bike. Now what?</p> <p>First – buy a helmet. Then, find a Coach. You will read us recommending a coach a lot, but the investment in learning is so incredibly important to your success.</p> <p>You have time and you’ll get the miles, but right now, make sure you learn how to have fun on that machine. Safety and confidence on the bike opens up an incredible opportunity for a lifelong love of riding and racing.</p>



LET'S LOOK AT THE WHAT'S NEXT

The goal of this programme is to get you started, to move you along this journey and lead you to the next step of your journey. We recommend that through the first three quarters of your training season you focus on the progress you are making from the start line. Once you cross that point, then we start looking for the finish line.

To keep it going, we recommend setting some real goals for the next four weeks. Look back on what you've done and let's see if we can add 10% to the mix. A 10% increase in time can go a long way – and it can all happen on the weekend ride or it can happen in 10-minute increments across the week. Training for an IRONMAN is all about incremental increases in time and intensity. You don't do it all at once. In three months you will be in awe of what you have accomplished.

As you celebrate that first four weeks, I want to encourage you to join a team and talk to a coach. You don't have to sign up for anything, but a conversation with a local team or coach about what they do and how their programmes work can lead to a super-efficient training plan and some pretty awesome new friends.

If you are wondering how to approach a conversation with a coach, we recommend the following self-analysis worksheet. Walk into a meeting with this already filled in and you'll be the star student right away.

WORKSHEET SWOTT ANALYSIS FOR THE TRIATHLETE IN TRAINING

STRENGTHS

Strengths are physical, mental and logistical. Examples include: Strong core and swimming background, 9-5 work schedule, access to a training facility, extensive race experience etc. Please be very specific.

WEAKNESSES

Weaknesses are physical, mental and logistical. Examples include: History specific injury, random work hours, old bike, no access to training facility, getting married, having kids, major life changes occurring during the training season.

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities are new developments in life or training that you view as beneficial to your success. Examples include: Just started working with a nutritionist, purchased a computrainer, took a class in exercise physiology, just moved to the beach.

TOYS

What are you currently training with? Will there be an upgrade or are you looking for an upgrade in the near future?

TIPS

Tips are the little things you learned in the first four weeks. Things that will help you navigate your schedule or the physical challenges of your training.

SOME FINAL WORDS FROM THE FOLKS AT IRONMAN U

1. Be realistic – think of reality versus the goal. In other words, you may want to work out every morning, but the truth is that you love to sleep. Be real with yourself. Once you conquer what's real, your definition of what's possible may just expand.
2. Take your time - planning is a process that should be started, walked away from and returned to after 1 day. You have big goals and a life to fit those goals into. Take your time. You will find the right fit for you, but the fit depends on the answers to your form.
3. Talk to someone - if you have other folks that rely on your schedule - talk to them. Is there a wedding in June that will interrupt your training? Is there a weekend commitment that you don't know you are committed to just yet? Get the answers.
4. Have fun - this is an adventure. Whether it is your first or you're going for your fastest, the fun is in the preparation for the event

Here we go!

QUICK ADVICE FROM AN OLD COACH:

PICKING A COACH

We always refer to the "Coach-Athlete Relationship". The word relationship is critical. When you choose a coach, interview them and be hyper critical and allow them to interview you. You want to know how that coach communicates. Are they great with e-mail or phone calls? Do they write training plans through an online training tool? Are they data geeks or are they more focused on "feel"? Then ask yourself the same questions. Is data important to you? Does it motivate or frustrate? Do you need a smiley face or thumbs up after each workout (which is awesome) or are you ok with a weekly check in? Talk candidly about what you need to support your goals – after all, your coach will invest a lot of their time focused on your goals, so communication is key.

CHOOSING A BIKE:

THERE ARE TWO CRITICAL PARTS OF PURCHASING A BIKE. MOST IMPORTANT IS WHETHER THAT BIKE FITS YOUR BODY.

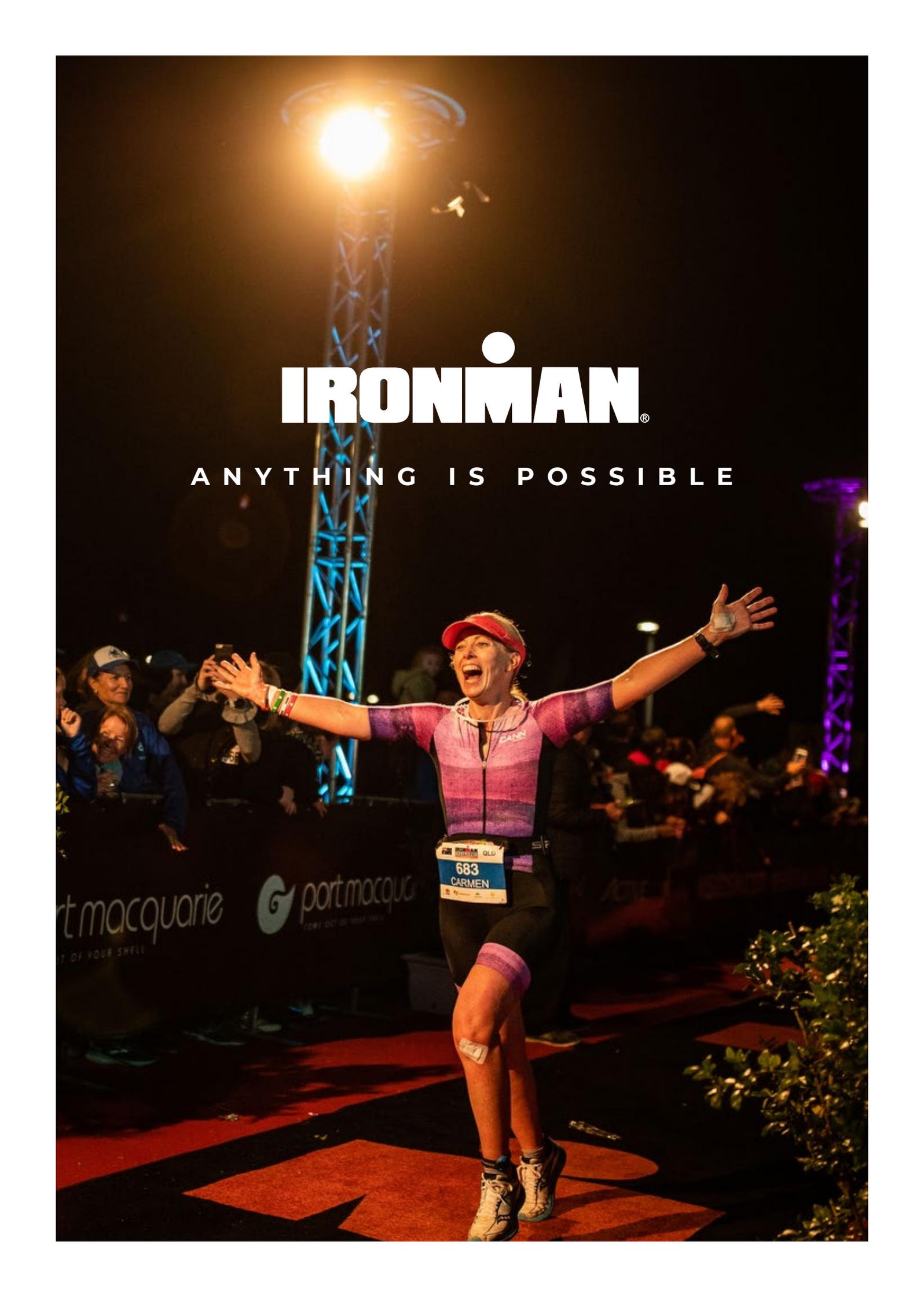
An ill-fitting bike can cause injury if you put too many miles in. (note: a €500 perfectly fitted bike will be way more fun to ride than a €5,000 ill-fitting one). If the bike fits, the next important thing is whether you get excited to ride it. Get the colour you love, get something that makes you feel fast. You'll feel inspired at any speed and be more likely to get out of bed to get your training in.

Final Words – Respect the distance, immerse yourself in the journey and be grateful for the opportunity to do something amazing!



EARL WALTON

IRONMAN Global Director, Training and Coaching

A triathlete, Carmen, is captured in a moment of triumph at the end of a race at night. She is wearing a pink and purple triathlon suit, a red visor, and a race bib with the number 683. Her arms are raised in the air, and she has a wide, joyful expression. The scene is illuminated by a large, bright light tower in the background, casting a warm glow. Spectators are visible in the background, some taking photos. The ground is covered with a red carpet, and there are some plants in the foreground. The overall atmosphere is one of excitement and achievement.

IRONMAN®

ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE