

getting through the new orleans ironman 70.3 race

1.2 miles of swimming along the shores of Lake Pontchartrain, 56 miles of riding through New Orleans, and a 13.1 mile run through the streets of the French Quarter to reach 70.3 total miles of racing. Whether the upcoming Ochsner Ironman 70.3 on April 5, 2009, is your first triathlon or just your first race of the season, pre-race preparation is key to your success. With only a few weeks until the 70.3 race, there are some important things you should take into consideration before the big event.

Create a training plan and checklist that leads up to raceday to help reduce stress and pre-race jitters. Your plan should include the final workouts of your training program, your raceday attire, a thorough equipment check, and pre and raceday eating plans.

As the Ironman 70.3 approaches, your workouts should closely mimic the race. Swim workouts should be directly followed by a bike workout, and bike rides followed by a run. This is not the time in your training to ramp up the volume and intensity in your workouts. It also might be a good idea to practice transitions, the fourth component of triathlons where you change equipment for the next portion of the race. You can lay out all of your transition items and time yourself from the swim-to-bike and bike-to-run, to have an idea of what works best for you.

Two weeks before the race, athletes should bring their bikes to a bicycle shop for a tune-up and inspection of the tires, frame, chains, and brake pads. The day before the 70.3, you should pack your bag to make sure you have everything you need for the race. Check all your equipment to make sure it works, and lay out your raceday clothes the night before.

What you eat before, during, and after the triathlon is just as important as the actual race. A few days before the race, you should stick to foods you normally eat. If you're planning on eating an energy bar or gels during the bike or run, you should practice in a workout to test how your body reacts to the flavor and consistency. Remember what works for someone else may not work for you, so it is important to test everything from your raceday food choices to the liquids you drink.

As for getting through the bike and run portion of the race, counting your calories is the best way to determine how much your body needs. Dependent on size and weight, 200-400 kcal per hour is generally the amount of food you should consume on the bike and run. Your fluid intake should be about 15-20 ounces an hour depending on weather conditions and your sweat ratio. It is also a good idea to drink Gatorade or a similar beverage to replace electrolytes lost during the race.

For more information on multi-sport or triathlon training, contact Ben Elder at Elmwood Fitness Center at 504.842.6155 or belder@ochsner.org

