

# Coach-Athlete Q&A

A look at some coach-replies to common questions by topic.

Q: Hey Sonni,

Just wondering, what is the reason what are the pros and cons of a compact crankset on my bike?

A: Pro's:

1--gearing range where the gear increments are more closely spaced. In other words, more gear options on the "tall" end.....& you're less likely to be forced to turn a gear (to get the speed) that's really "too tall"....which would negatively impact RUN-legs off the bike.

2--ability to have a higher gearing range (ez'r gears for climbing) and still maintain small-increment "jumps" w/o a way-big-tooth cog (like a 27) on the rear cassette

3--lighter crank

4--less severe chain angle (since the front chain-rings are closer in size to the rear cogs) = less friction and less wear

5--lighter chain (fewer links)

6--ability to actually USE your 12, 13, and 14 tooth cogs in TT situations in combination w/ the 50.....while the 12, 13, and 14 x 53 go relatively un-used (*except on downhill and big-tailwind sections*)

7--ability to often STAY in your big-ring over "roller" hills (maintaining momentum), rather than down-shifting to the small ring (losing momentum) to maintain a near-90rpm cadence.

Con's:

--often said to need a compact-specific front-derailer (*though I never have on any compact bike I've owned, & mine have shifted fine*)

--Loss of a 40+mph "sprint gear" when bike racing & field sprinting (*unless you exchange your rear-cassette's 12 w/ an 11 cog*)

--Loss of a 40+mph "decending gear" ....which, as we've discussed for Tri, is a period of time that you should be resting and @ 0rpm's,

anyway, (*unless you exchange your rear-cassette's 12 w/ an 11 cog*)

--fewer crankset options than a standard 53-39 set-up (though this is changing as more and more manufacturers see the value in offering compact.

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