



Q: Since you are my coach, and this being my first half ironman (in fact my >third triathlon overall) what kind of advice can you give me? By the way, >thanks so much for answering my e-mails, I really appreciate it.
>D.O.

A: The best advice that ANY coach could give begins w/ these 3 points:

- 1-patience!
- 2-patience!
- 3-patience!

Understand that a half-IM is a long day (5+ hours) in some potentially brutal conditions. The difference between a smart swim and a fast one is only 2-3 minutes. The difference between a smart bike & an aggressive bike leg is really only about 5-9 minutes.....but because it's LAST (& usually in the heat), the difference between a run (or WALK as the case often is) that follows an impatient swim/bike and one that caps off a steady, calculated prior effort can be an HOUR.....or even more.

Moral of the story.....**SPREAD OUT THE EFFORT!**

As long as you make sure that you have 3 things.....**1**-fluid to hydrate, **2**-calories to fuel, & **3**-electrolytes (salt) to keep the other two working.....all you have to do is to NOT allow yourself to get overanxious and begin 'digging-down' early on (in the first 3:30 of the race) and creating lactic acid that you'll have to race with all day.

I'm not saying to not dig down. Mile 7 on the run is an ideal time. But you need to ALLOW yourself to get there feeling very good.

Most people will 'psychologically' not keep the hr in check on the swim. Then, they'll impatiently attack the first 25miles of the bike and be **FORCED** to drop the gearing/hr for the final 20m on the bike.....and they'll walk/run for survival from aid-station to aid-station to the finish. Swim as though you're just trying to get through it.

Get on the bike, go to the big ring, but just pretend it's one of your long ea/maf training rides (and be sure to get 250calories for each hour there). When you rack the bike, take your time in that transition...T2... (hydrate, take a salt tablet, get some calories).....and run with the idea that the goal is to keep running.

At this point.....w/ the potential heat & length of time you've been out there.....your hr WILL likely elevate above maf. That's ok. Because from this point.....without alot of previous lactate build-up, you can maintain your effort til the finish.

If you get to the 7mile mark on the run.....and feel absolutely great.....**PUSH THE PACE.**

Chances are that you'll get there &, if you've listened to me, will feel 'good'.....but good enough to maintain the steady effort/pace. Stay the course.

If you get to 7 and you've been walking for 3-4 miles, you erred on the side of too much intensity on the bike.....or got off on your nutritional gameplan (see "Fueling The Machine" for this).

Patience wins. **You should be "practically conversational" all day long for the half-iron.** (*Read this last statement over and over!*)

And by all means.....have fun!!

Sonni