

## IMFL Training Log Irwin Sheer

**9/16/2006**

### **Seven weeks to IMFL**

In about seven weeks I'm going to attempt something that is either really bold or really stupid (probably a little of both). On Saturday, November 4, 2006 in Panama City Beach Florida I will attempt to run my first Ironman Triathlon. This blog will capture the last weeks of a journey that really began about five years ago.

I feel that I need a few disclaimers before beginning. This is my first blog and I have never kept a diary before so I'm sure to make some obvious mistakes. I am in no way a gifted athlete. The truth is that I am a solid middle of the pack athlete and quite content with that. Up until quite recently, I never even entertained the thought that I had an Ironman in me. I am, however, a very goal oriented individual and over each of the last few years I have set slightly more challenging goals for myself:

2002:	Olympic Distance Triathlon	NYC Triathlon
2003:	Marathon	NYC Marathon
2004:	Half Ironman Triathlon	Tupper Lake Tinman Triathlon
2005:	Sub 4 hour Marathon	Philadelphia Marathon
2006:	Ironman Triathlon	Ironman Florida

Paste the following URLs into your browser if you want to read more about my NYC Marathon or Tinman Triathlon adventures:

<http://www.geocities.com/isheer/marathon1.pdf>

<http://www.geocities.com/isheer/halfim.pdf>

I have set the following goals for IMFL:

1. To not hurt myself.
2. To finish in the allotted time of 17 hours.
3. To try and have some fun.

I have been training according to a multisports.com training plan for the last 15 weeks. The plan is very similar to the one described in Paul Huddle and Roch Frey's book, "Start to Finish: Ironman Training". This is the tail end of my second IM build week. Next week is a recovery week (which I'm really looking forward to) and then I expect two more IM build weeks before beginning a three week taper.

Today was a long run day. Met Jackie and Heather at Sleepy Hollow HS for a 2h15 run in the Rockies. Heather and I basically tagged along with Jackie and her friends for the first hour and a half. They took us into the Rockies along a new route that went into the park via the Stone Barn. Mixing up the route was nice for a change. When we got back to the parking lot we still had about 40 minutes to go so we headed out on to the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail for an out and back.

After the run Heather and I headed over to Valhalla for a 90 minute recovery ride. We looped around Kensico, cut through Armonk and returned via North White Plains. We encountered a lot more traffic on this route than our usual recovery ride on the North County Trailways. For this I take full responsibility having left my bike behind because the weather looked unlikely to improve.

All in all it was a pretty easy workout and that is something I never thought I would say about a 15 mile run and 20+ mile ride!

Plan for tomorrow is to ride the Golden Apple Century and follow this up with a 40-50 min transition run.

**9/17/2006**

**Golden Apple Century**

Today was the 25th anniversary of the Golden Apple ride. I am told that over 1100 riders participated. Among them were Heather, Jackie and myself. The weather cooperated and we had a really fine day. It even got a bit warm in the afternoon. Jackie kept Heather and I company for the first half of the ride. We completed the century in 6h24 riding time with a pace just under 16 mph. I have done the GA about a half dozen times and this is the first time that I did not feel completely spent at the end of the ride. I was a bit apprehensive about riding the GA on my tri bike given all the hills (about 6000 ft of climbing) but this turns out not to have been a problem. Saw lots of aerobars (a testament to the rising popularity of triathlon perhaps?) but did not see a single other bike with bar end shifters...

Because of the lateness of the hour when we returned, I was on my own for the transition run. Probably the hardest thing that I did today was to eschew the cold drink and sandwich at the end of the ride and force myself to go out for the run. My training schedule called for a transition run of 40-50 minutes to be started within 10 minutes of finishing the ride. I managed to satisfy this requirement with a couple of loops on Rte 22. It was hot out there on the run and I had to keep slowing myself down to a shuffle to keep from blowing up.

This brings the second IM build week to a close. Cumulative workout times for the week are shown below:

Swim:	2h54
Bike:	9h47
Run:	6h14
Weights:	1h20
<b>Total:</b>	<b>20h15</b>

Next week is a recovery week which starts with a well earned rest day!

**9/18/2006**

**Rest Day**

I was really feeling yesterday when I got up this morning and was tempted to reach for the vitamin-I (Ibuprofin) but decided to tough it out today.

Over the last few weeks I have become concerned because my shoes are giving me problems after about 4 hrs on the bike. My feet must be swelling and there seems to be not enough room in the toe box. In a similar vein I have not been happy with my saddle as when I move forward into an aero position I come off my sits bones and wind up with too much friction and pressure.

These problems are now behind me (no pun intended). The new saddle and shoes worked out very well yesterday. The [saddle](#) looks a little strange but is actually quite comfortable. The shoes are road shoes rather than tri shoes which means I give up a little time in transition (negligible for an IM distance race) for some additional comfort.

The plan for tomorrow is an early morning turbo session on the trainer followed by a short transition run.

**9/19/2006**

**Vuelta a Espana**

This morning I rode in the Vuelta a Espana. What? You don't believe me? Ok, so I indulge in a bit of fantasy from time to time. The truth is that I rode the trainer while watching the Vuelta on TiVo. Vino rode an amazing race and got his revenge on the TDF. Too bad professional cycling has been dogged by so much doping. I now believe that cyclists treat doping rules much like drivers treat speed limits.

Interval workout today:

20 min warm-up

4x30 second single leg drill

1/2/3/4/5/4/3/2/1 min intervals with 2 min easy between

4x30 fast spin

10 min cool-down

Followed by 2 mi transition run.

Was supposed to start intervals with heart rate in zone 2 and finish in zone 4 but my legs have not fully recovered so best I was able to do was zone 3.

Plan for tomorrow is early morning swim then back to the gym to lift weights at lunch time.

**9/20/2006**

**Double**

Early morning swim to start the day. This being a recovery week I got to set the alarm back to 05:30. The workout today is all 25's, 50's and 100's. Last week the sets were 500's & 800's. I like the long sets because I can get a rhythm going. The short stuff is annoying and it is easy to lose count.

Warm-up: 100, 20x50 fist gloves

Main set: 15x100, 12x50

Cool-down: 16x25, 100

Total nominal distance is 3700 yds. Actual distance is closer to 3500 yds as NYSC pool in WP is short ([23.8](#) yds).

Terry Laughlin of [Total Immersion](#) fame convinced me that I should toss all the usual pool toys (paddles, pull buoy, kick board & zoomers) and just drill with fist gloves. He is more eloquent than I but the general gist of it is that fist gloves make it harder so that when you take them off your hands feel like you have paddles on. With the usual pool toys the opposite is true. (Know somebody that wants some used pool toys?)

At lunch I trundled over to the gym for the second half of my double. Time to hit the weights. I am in the second week of what my coaches call a chisel phase. Each exercise is to be done fast (less 2 sec per repetition). Workout consists of the following sets:

50 x arm circles L&R

15 x total body warm up

2x12 lat pulldown

2x12 reverse lunge

2x12 bench press

2x12 dumbbell pullover

2x12 supinated biceps curls

2x12 triceps extensions

3 x abdominals (12 crunch, 12 oblique L&R, 12 crunch legs lifted)

3x12 press-ups

Plan for tomorrow is a tempo run with pick-ups. Did I mention that the best part of recovery week is the massage?

**9/21/2006**

**Pose Method of Running**

Tempo run with a few intervals today. Ran little more than one loop of Central Park. Little more because it was dark and I missed my exit... Also forgot foot-pod and chest strap so no stats today except for total run time of 1h04.

Warm-up: 20 min, stretch, 10 accels

Tempo run: 30 min w/5x1:00 pick-ups

Cool-down: 10 min

Running is my biggest limiter. Swimming and cycling are temperature regulated and non-weight bearing which by comparison makes them easier (for me anyway). It seems that over the years I have struggled more to improve my running than either of the other sports. In addition, I have had all sorts of unpleasant running injuries along the way: IT Band syndrome, Achilles Tendonitis, pulled hamstring, and sprained

ankle. I feel that my most significant advances have been a direct result of improved technique. Not only has this made me a more efficient runner but I have had noticeably fewer injuries.

I learned about running technique by reading a book about the [Pose Method](#) of running. Some of the things that I learned from Dr. Romanov include:

- Forward motion is generated by gravity not friction.
- Keep your body straight and lean from your ankles.
- Strike with your mid-foot (run like you would if you were barefoot).
- Use your hamstring to lift your foot but let gravity pull it back down.
- Favor short strides with high frequency over long strides with low frequency.

Unfortunately, I'm still not what you would consider fast but I no longer need to use a calendar to measure my splits.

Plan for tomorrow is another double -- early morning swim and weights at lunchtime.

**9/22/2006**

### **Early Morning Swim**

I really enjoy an early morning swim. Hate getting up before dawn but love the swim. It is just a great way to start the day. You get to float to work on an endorphin buzz. It is fun to go to an early morning meeting and watch your desperate colleagues struggle to wake-up with their Vente StarBucks.

Today's workout:

Warm-up: 100, 2x500fg, 2x500

Main set: 16x50, 6x25 fast, 200

Cool-down: 300, 200

Total distance 3750 yds, swim time 1h13.

Had to work through lunch today so weights were delayed till late afternoon. Same workout as Wednesday.

Plan for tomorrow is 180-210 min long ride followed by 15-20 min transition run.

**9/23/2006**

### **Phase IV**

Yesterday evening phase four of my training program was revealed. This phase will take me through to IMFL. Roughly, the schedule looks like two hard weeks, a recovery week, and a three week taper. The two hard weeks will include the longest ride and longest run of 7 and 3 hours, respectively.

This is the second time that I have worked with coaches. The first time was when I trained for my first half IM at Tupper Lake. It makes a lot of sense to me to work with a coach when you are training for a specific goal. There is a lot that they can contribute to helping you achieve your goal. Some of the more important things that I have learned from working with coaches include:

- Periodization
- Alternating hard and easy days
- Mixing up your workouts
- Having at least one rest day per week
- Having regular recovery weeks
- Training with a heart rate monitor
- Training for both endurance and speed are important
- Weights and stretching are important

Today's ride was a wet one. Started from SUNY at 6:30 am with members of the Westchester Triathlon Club (WTC). Their plan was to ride to Ridgefield via Stamford and put in a hundred miles. My plan was less ambitious. We started out with six people and picked up three more along the way. The WTC guys are a pretty amazing bunch. I'm just trying to get fit enough to

finish one of these IM races. They are training to compete! I often find myself on rides with guys who have done more than half a dozen of these races. Some have even qualified for and competed in Hawaii. Being able to train with a group that has this much experience has been a real opportunity for me.

I hung with the group for about an hour and a half and then headed back via Pound Ridge and Bedford with Ed who also wanted to put in a shorter ride. Total ride time today was 3h17. Followed up ride with a twenty minute transition run. Average heart rate on the ride was 131 bpm and on the run it was 153 bpm.

Plan for tomorrow is weather dependent. If it is nice I'm going to participate in a mock duathlon consisting of 2 mi run / 7 mi ride / 2 mi run / 7 mi ride / 2 mi run. If it is not so nice I will do a long run of 70-90 minutes and then do a recovery ride of 60 minutes on my trainer. Forecast is for scattered thunderstorms.

**9/24/2006**

### **Mock Duathlon**

This morning I participated in the second annual Sleepy Hollow Mock Duathlon. The format for the race was 2 mi run / 7 mi bike / 2 mi run / 7 mi bike / 2 mi run. The course was quite difficult as the bike route has a major hill right in the middle of it. The race was run out of Rob Whalen's house. I got there early because I wanted to do a warm up loop. Rob had marked the trail with orange blazes. Unfortunately there was this subtle bit of trail cross cutting that I missed and my short warm up ended up being a 40 min run.

I got back just in time for the start of the race. The weather was warm and humid. My splits for the race were as follows: r1 (16:33.9) b1 (27:45.8) r2 (17:33.7) b2 (26:22.5) r3 (17:00.3) with a total time of (1:45:16). Splits for all but r1 include

transition time. B1 is slower than b2 because I missed a turn and had to go a longer route. I like the fact that I was able to negative split the run. The good news is that I took third place overall and took home a prize to boot! The bad news is I finished dead last. Participation in the race, however, was up 50% over last year...

After the race, I took one more easy loop on the bike as a recovery ride. I find that this helps to flush out my legs. Total run time today 91 min and bike time 84 min.

This brings my recovery week to a close. Cumulative workout times for the week are shown below:

Swim:	2h26
Bike:	6h02
Run:	3h12
Weights:	1h15
<b>Total:</b>	<b>12h55</b>

Next week will be a hard one. Plan for tomorrow is early morning swim.

**9/25/2006**

### **Turbo Trainer Torture**

Hit the gym at lunchtime to lift weights. Schedule calls for maintenance: warm up, 2x10 reps of lats/lunges/bench/pull-over/curl/tri-extensions, and 3x10 of abs/back.

After work set the trainer up in the living room for the turbo trainer workout:

Warm-up: 15 min moderate, 2x3 min hard with 2 min easy recovery

Main set: 8/15/12/10 min hard with 4 min easy recovery, 3 x (45 sec fast / 45 sec normal)

Cool-down: 15-20 min

Total time on trainer 1h51. Followed trainer workout with 32 min transition run. I find this to be one of the most difficult workouts of the week. Only good part is being able to catch up with TiVo. Watched the US National Cycling

championships. Saw Hincapie and Leipheimer dominate the road race. Did you know that Levi will be joining the Discovery team next year?

Plan for tomorrow is early morning swim.

**9/26/2006**

### **Swimming**

If running is my limiter that must make swimming my enabler. This, on a comparative basis, is the best of the three disciplines for me. I am a relatively strong swimmer for a triathlete. Of course, this does not say that much as triathletes are not renowned for their swimming ability. So with swimming my best leg and running my worst a race is downhill all the way for me...

Perhaps I am better at swimming because technique plays a larger role than the other sports. I have been swimming since I was a kid being fortunate to grow up with a pool in the backyard. In High School, I was even on the diving team for a year -- was not very good though. It was not till I was a graduate student that I started actually swimming laps. At first I was out of breath in just a couple of lengths. Then I figured out that if I slowed down I could find a pace that allowed me to keep on going. This was one of my first break through swimming experiences.

A few years ago I spent a year swimming with the masters team in Mt. Kisco. They have a great coach and I learned a lot from him. This was another break through experience. I never really got comfortable with swimming all the other strokes (my butterfly is pathetic) and have always been focused on the longer distances so masters swimming was not a real good fit.

I am pretty comfortable swimming on my own and have been pretty consistent about it. For a while I trained out of a book with workouts for triathletes. After taking the

TI workshop I started just doing my own thing. Now I am mostly following the workout that my coaches have scheduled.

Today's workout:

Warm-up: 100, 800fg

Main set: 2x600, 2x400, 2x300, 2x200

Cool-down: 800, 100

Total workout distance 4800 yds, total workout time 1h28.

Turned today into a double by slipping in a weight workout. Same as yesterday. Looks like this may also be the last weight workout on the schedule.

Plan for tomorrow is looking more and more like a rest day. Had intended on doing the tempo run tomorrow and resting on Friday for the big weekend but schedule is too tight.

**9/28/2006**

### **Why Tri?**

Why do I do triathlons? A lot of the credit (blame?) for this has to go to my Dad. He taught me to swim, to ride a bike, and got me to run my first 10k. Unfortunately, he also had a heart attack when I was just 12 years old. It turns out that I have been cursed with a huge genetic load that predisposes me to coronary disease. Since I was twelve I have been hearing from doctors the following mantra: stay in shape, watch what you eat, and don't smoke. Now I'm sure that doctors probably tell this to everyone but there is nothing like watching your father go through multiple bypass surgeries to drive the point home.

So I have tried to stay in shape. Back in the late eighties I was doing some swimming, some running, and a lot of martial arts. In 1988, I hyperextended my knee sparring and tore a meniscus which ultimately required arthroscopic surgery. While recuperating from surgery the

doctor suggested that I ride a bike as a form of physical therapy.

At the time I was living in the small town of Nyon which is about 22 km from Geneva, Switzerland. One afternoon in the spring of 1989, I was lazing about reading an issue of Outside Magazine, after having done a morning ride. An article about USTS Triathalons caught my interest. Don't remember the exact distances but it must have been pretty close to what we call Olympic today. For some reason I remarked to Yvonne that I thought I could do that. The very next day the local weekly paper arrived on our doorstep announcing that Nyon was going to stage its first ever triathalon. My bluff was called!

I don't recall all the details but somehow I convinced Yvonne to do it with me and together we persuaded a third friend, Theresa, to do it with us. Nyon actually ran two versions of the race. The full length version and a shorter one. We decided to take it slow and easy and opted to run the sprint distance. All three of us stuck together and finished in around two hours.

One year later I did the race by myself and finished in about an hour and a half. Then I guess I got distracted because I put the whole notion of triathalon out of my head for over a decade.

Fast forward 12 years. Yvonne and I are having dinner with friends and one of them mentions that he has the notion to run the NYC Triathlon. The unfinished business I had with an Olympic distance triathlon comes back to me in a flash and I'm on board.

In 2002, I finally made good on my boast and ran my first Olympic distance triathlon. To do so I had to swim in the Hudson and run 10 km in 95 degree heat.

It took me over three hours to complete the race but by the time I finished I was once again hooked. Since then it seems that I have embarked on a voyage of self discovery each year learning that I have more capacity than I ever thought possible.

I really enjoy triathlon. Participating in three sports really keeps things from getting dull. I like the flexibility that it gives me. I can wake up on a Saturday or Sunday and look at the weather and opt to run or ride. I like that I am less likely to get an overuse injury or to burnout. The way the three sports compliment each other ensures that all of my muscles get sufficient attention. I especially like other triathletes and hanging out with them.

**9/29/2006**

### **Randall's Island Loop**

Tempo run today. Ran up the East Side Esplanade, crossed the foot bridge to Randall's Island, looped around the island and then returned via the Esplanade. Very pretty run as you get a real nice view of the east side from the island.

Just me and my iShuffle today. Unfortunately I had all this mellow stuff on it from the last time I took it with me on an airplane. Need to load it up with some edgy stuff for running. It is amazing how much faster the time seems to pass with the music.

I looked up Randall's Island on the internet and found that it has a pretty checkered past. The island gets its name from Jonathan Randel who purchased the island in 1784. His heirs later sold it to the city for \$60,000 in 1835. Seems the island has been used for or was home to: a burial ground for the poor, a quarantine area for smallpox victims, a poorhouse, a house of refuge for juvenile delinquents, an idiot asylum, and an inebriate asylum. In 1933 that all changed when the state transferred ownership of the island to Parks &

Recreation and it was transformed into a recreation hub.

Workout details:

Warm-up: 2.1 mi at 8:53 pace, stretch, 6 accels

Main set: 6.0 mi at 8:16 pace

Cool-down: 1.7 mi at 9:08 pace

Total distance 9.8 mi total workout time 1h25.

Big weekend coming up. Plan for tomorrow is 5-6 hr bike followed by 50-60 min transition run.

**9/30/2006**

**Brick**

Ever wonder why they call a bike/run workout a brick? I did and went looking for the answer. Unfortunately there seems not to be a definitive answer. I did find the following assertions though:

1. Because your legs feel like bricks.
2. Because it would feel better if you took a brick to your head.
3. Because it evokes the notion of stacking.

Today's workout was an Iron Brick. Arrived at SUNY at 6:30 am to ride with Westchester Triathletes. Was surprised to find that only Heather and her sister Maureen had shown up. The three of us set off on a grand adventure. As I'm the only one that knew the area, I got to play ride leader. I tried to keep the ride as flat as possible. The route took us through Bedford, Pound Ridge, Katonah, Millwood and back in more or less the same direction. We got in some nice flats on Route 100, North, and Lake Streets. Total ride distance was 87 miles, total ride time was 5h41, average pace 15.9 mph. Heather, henceforth, will be known as Gardener because she forgot to bring gloves and bought a pair of cotton gardening gloves along the way.

We got back to SUNY as luck would have it at the same time as Peter and Carl who had been out doing their own thing. They kept me company on my first lap though Carl pushed the pace. Total run time was 0h50, run distance 6 miles.

The recovery week really worked as I felt great today. Plan for tomorrow is kind of complicated. My coaches have split a three hour run into a morning run of 2h20 and an evening run of 0h40. Their rationale for this is that it allows you to get in the duration yet speeds recovery time. I will also try to get in a recovery ride after the morning run.

**10/1/2006**

**Dead Legs and Soggy Shoes**

Not much spring in my legs this morning. Met Janis at Sleepy Hollow HS for a long run in the Rockies. To say that we got rained on would be somewhat of an understatement. At about the halfway point in the run it was coming down in sheets and we were soaked to the skin. My shoes felt like they gained 5 lb each. Usually I find running in the rain refreshing. I guess refreshing crosses over to annoying when my shoes fill with water. Luckily it did not last and it was not that cold. By the time we hit the parking lot I was still wet but the shirt I was wearing had wicked away most of the moisture from my skin and I was no longer sloshing around in my boots. Total run time 2h16, run distance 15.1 miles, 9:03 pace, and average heart rate was 146 bpm.

Loosened up my legs by spinning on the trainer for an hour. I find it is amazing how much this speeds recovery from a long run and am surprised by how few other triathletes take advantage of this.

While my wife went for her evening constitutional, I did the second half of my run. Legs were tired but otherwise in good shape. Total run time 0h46, total run

distance 5 miles, 9:13 pace, and average heart rate 144 bpm. Total run today was 20.1 mi in 3h02. This will be my longest run prior to IMFL.

Cumulative workout totals for the week:

Swim:	2h51
Bike:	8h12
Run:	5h49
Weights:	1h00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>17h52</b>

Next week is last build week. Plan for tomorrow is turbo torture session.

**10/2/2006**

### **Top Five**

Here is my top five list of the things I like most about a turbo trainer brick:

5. Setting up and breaking down the trainer is so much fun.
4. You realize that the Marquis de Sade had his good points.
3. The 70 (90) minute workouts usually take at least 90 (110) minutes.
2. Getting a chance to practice running in the dark.
1. You develop a new appreciation for Chamois Butt'r.

Today's workout:

Warm-up: 20 minutes

Main set: 8 x (3 min HR#3low, 2 min HR#3high, 1 min HR#2)

Cool-down: 15 minutes

Total trainer time 1h24. Followed trainer workout by 3.5 mile transition run. Felt pretty peppy for most of the run. Total run time 0h31, average pace 8:53.

Plan for tomorrow is evening swim.

**10/3/2006**

### **Yoga, Pilates & Stretching**

Managed to slip in a Pilates mat class at lunch today. Now that I no longer have any more weight training sessions on the program, I'm going to try and fit in a few

yoga and Pilates workouts. Stretching is an integral part of my workout ritual and I believe that it is probably almost as important as good technique in preventing injury. I try to stretch after every bike or run workout for at least 5-10 minutes.

A few years ago I had the notion that I could get a good stretch by taking a yoga class and have the opportunity to ogle some bendy girls in tights. Turns out that I was right about the former and wrong about the latter. (The bendy girls wear yoga pants.) For the last few years I have been doing yoga on and off and it has had a significant impact on my flexibility. For example, touching my toes used to be a challenge and now I can put my palms on the floor.

I have less experience with Pilates but am finding that it is a great way to building core strength. This is something that you really want if you plan to spend 6-7 hours in an aero position on a bike.

Swim workout this evening consisted of:

Warm-up: 200, 24x50fg

Main set: 12x150

Cool-down: 12x75, 200

Total swim distance 4200 yds, total swim time 1h24.

Plan for tomorrow is interval workout.

**10/4/2006**

### **50 miles**

Fartleks today, that's Swedish for 'speed play'. Eastside Esplanade to Randall's with Michael. It was pretty dark by the time we got to the island. Better remember to bring a headlamp next time. Here are the workout details:

Warm-up: 20 min, stretch

Main set: 7 x ( 5 min HR#3, 2 min HR#2 )

Cool-down: 27 min

Total run time 1h37, total run distance 10.7 mi.

This brings cumulative run distance to 50 mi over last week, which is probably a new record for me! I think that my longest run week prior to this was about 45 mi. I know a lot of serious runners will do 70-80 mile weeks training for a marathon so I realize it is not that big a deal, nevertheless, it still makes me feel pretty good.

I was planning on swimming in the morning but it is pretty late so I think that I will shift that to Friday. I guess that makes tomorrow a rest day...

IMFL is exactly one month from today!

### **10/5/2006**

#### **Sleep**

Nada today. Rest is very important and often taken for granted or underrated. Sleep is even more important. One of the biggest challenges for me has been ensuring that I get at least 8 hours per night. This often means that I have to go to bed at 9:00 pm (tonight for example). Even getting eight is sometimes not enough. It is not unusual for me to nod out on the train or take a nap on the weekend. The body needs time to build itself back up after you stress it. In addition, it is cold season and I really don't want to risk being run down and vulnerable. Had I stuck to my original schedule for today I would have gotten less than seven hours of sleep and be dragging my ass by now.

Plan for tomorrow is early morning swim.

### **10/6/2006**

#### **5000 yds**

Another milestone, my first 5000 yd swim! Just put on the old SwiMP3 player and rock and rolled my way through:

Warm-up: 100, 800fg

Main set: 5x700

Cool-down: 800, 100

Total swim distance 5300 yds, total swim time 1h39. Could have kept on going but would have been late for work...

Big day tomorrow. Longest training ride. Weather forecast looks good.

### **10/7/2006**

#### **Over the Hump!**

Did my longest training ride today. With my longest run and longest swim now behind me it feels as if I'm over the hump in my training. It is a wonderful feeling! A considerable source of stress over the past few months was trying to figure out how the heck I was going to find time to do all of this training. Some weeks I had to manipulate my schedule like it was a #15 puzzle to get in all my workouts.

Showed up at SUNY this morning for the 6:30 am WTC ride. Was not expecting a big turnout and I was not disappointed. Todd who is also training for IMFL was the only one there. We did what has become my favorite training ride. I'm going to call it the horseshoe ride because that's how I picture it in my head. The ride heads first through Bedford then Pound Ridge, Katonah, and Millwood. When you get to Sleepy Hollow you head back following the same general route. From Bedford the ride heads to Greenwich and returns to SUNY via Glenville. I really like this ride because it has long stretches on Route 100 and North Street that are both about as flat as you will find around here and excellent training for Florida. Got to try out my nutrition plan today. It is kind of boring but apart from that I think it worked pretty well.

Total ride distance 104.3 mi, total ride time 6h39, average pace 16.1 mph, average heart rate 142 bpm.

Followed up ride with short transition run. Total run distance 3.8 mi, total run time 0h33, average pace 8:38, average heart rate 153 bpm.

Plan for tomorrow is another double run with a recovery ride in the middle.

**10/8/2006**

**Lake Placid**

Ran long with Frank and Martin this morning. Frank is an accomplished short course triathlete that has decided to bump it up to a half IM distance next year and Martin is two weeks out from his second Hawaii IM. I was at Lake Placid this summer with the WTC gang when Martin qualified.

That trip was a lot of fun and a big confidence boost for me. I had no idea that an IM race was such a draw for triathletes that were not competing. I expected LP to be full of friends and family but did not realize that it would also be full of triathletes that had come to train and watch. Rich Izzo organized the weekend from soup to nuts. He rented the condo and stocked it with about nine of us. Only Paul was actually doing the race. Rich has watching IMLP down to an art form. We were in the right place at the right time to see our buddies more than half a dozen times. In between we also were able to get in a two hour run and hour and a half bike ride.

We road the bike course in both directions the day before the race and did one loop of the swim the day after. Being there to watch Paul do his first IM and actually training on the course really made the whole thing real for me. I came away from the weekend feeling that this was really something that I could do.

Today's workout was a duathlon of sorts.

Run #1 was 2h13 in duration for 14.4 miles. Average pace was 9:13 and my

average heart rate was 142 bpm. Legs were pretty tapped out but I guess the whole point is learning to run long on tired legs.

Bike was 1h29 in duration for 20.1 miles. This was an easy recovery bike ride. Pace was a relaxed 13.6 mph and my heart rate averaged 122 bpm.

Run #2 was 0h22 in duration for about 2.4 miles. Goal of this run was to get my total run time for the day over two and a half hours. This was a double run like last weekend only I did not wait till evening to get it done. Average heart rate was 144 bpm. Foot pod sensor was malfunctioning so I have assumed same pace as R1.

Cumulative workout totals for the week:

Swim:	3h03
Bike:	10h09
Run:	3h39
<b>Total:</b>	<b>16h51</b>

Dropped the tri bike off yesterday with Rob at the Sleepy Hollow bike shop to get it tuned up for the race.

Next week is a recovery week! Plan for tomorrow is turbo brick.

**10/9/2006**

**Carbo-Pro**

Got a chance to try out my nutrition plan on Saturday's long ride. You have to walk a pretty fine line with nutrition. If you consume too few calories you are probably going to bonk. If you consume too many calories you may have some pretty unpleasant gastro-intestinal distress. I plan to use a strategy that a number of the WTC members have had success with and is something that my coaches have suggested.

They use this stuff called Carbo-Pro. It is pure complex carbohydrate with a neutral flavor. I put eight scoops in a water bottle

and then mix in three scoops of Gatorade endurance for flavor and electrolytes. This give me about 1050 calories in a bottle. Two bottles consumed on the ride in six hours is about 350 calories per hour. Toss in a banana at the halfway point and I should be all fueled up for the run. It is pretty boring nutrition plan but sometimes boring is good.

And sometimes boring is a turbo trainer workout:

Warm-up: 15 min, 6 x (30 sec fast, 30 sec easy)

Main set: 5 x (3 min hard, 2 min fast, 1 min hard, 2 min easy)

Cool-down: 15 min

Total trainer time 1h16.

Short transition run: duration 0h17, distance 1.9 miles, 8:48 pace.

Plan for tomorrow is early morning swim.

**10/10/2006**

### **Bilateral Breathing**

When I'm swimming, I try to breathe every third stroke. I get a crick in my neck if I always breathe to one side. It turns out that this is called bilateral breathing and is recommended for triathletes because it helps them to swim straighter in open water.

I find that one of the challenges when swimming laps is keeping count. Over the years I have figured out a few tricks to help me keep track:

- I swim on one side of the lane so that I always know if I am on an odd or even length. (This also make it easy for another swimmer to share the lane with me.)
- If I have a set like 10x250 I think of it as 100 lengths with pauses after every ten.
- For highly repetitive sets, I break the set into subsets. For example I might break a 20x50 set into five 4x50 subsets and then add an extra 5 sec rest interval after each subset.
- Sometimes I count yards instead of lengths.

- If I can, I will use the swim clock to keep track.
- When possible I will swim with someone else and let them keep count.

When all of the above fail and I lose track I choose to err on the conservative side in restarting my count and consider any extra lengths swum as bonus yards.

Today's workout:

Warm-up: 100, 12x100fg

Main set: 10x250

Cool-down: 300, 100

Total swim distance 4200 yds, total swim time 1h16.

Plan for tomorrow is speed work.

**10/11/2006**

### **Dreadmill**

It was raining tonight as I walked to the gym and I decided if there was a free treadmill I would run indoors. Not that I mind running in the rain, it was just that running in the city in the dark and in the rain just didn't seem too enticing.

It has been a while since I ran indoors. I forget just how slowly time passes on the treadmill. Even with the music and the LCD monitor time just seems to dilate for me. There was a time when I did a lot of running indoors and I hardly minded it but lately almost all the running I do is outside and my tolerance for the treadmill has diminished considerably.

To be fair treadmills offer up some advantages: they have a softer running surface, they can give you a chance to observe your technique in a mirror, you get precise control over your pace, and a water bottle holder to boot... The big difference for me between running indoors and out is that running outside is actually fun.

Today's workout:

Warm-up: 20 min, stretch

Main set: 2 x (2 min @ 10K pace, 2 min easy),  
8min @ 10K pace, 2 min easy, 2 x (45 second @  
5K pace, 2 min easy)

Cool-down: 15 min

Total run time 1h00, total run distance 6.4 miles.

Plan for tomorrow is rest day.

**10/12/2006**

### **Florida**

I have not yet explained why I chose IMFL. Choice though is probably overstating the reality. It was actually more a process of elimination...

First, I wanted the race to be sponsored by Ironman North America. Stupid as it sounds, I wanted it to be unambiguous. I wanted to do an Ironman and not just an iron distance race.

Second, I did not want to deal with travel abroad. Too many other things to worry about and if for some reason I failed to achieve my primary goal (not to hurt myself) I did not want to have to deal with foreign doctors, etc.

Third, since you spend a week there it had to be some place appealing to both Yvonne and I. In the US there are three races that satisfy those requirements: Arizona, Lake Placid, and Florida.

My family lives in Arizona and the weather there is delightful. In addition, the course is relatively easy by IM standards. Unfortunately the race is in the spring and it would have been a real challenge to get in the requisite training during a NY winter.

Lake Placid is nearby and stunningly beautiful. LP, however, is a relatively difficult course and the race is in mid-July so the weather can be an issue. I would

love to do LP but felt that it might not be a prudent choice for a first IM.

That left just Florida. Luckily Florida seemed to have it all: a magnificent beach, a relatively easy course, good weather, and best of all it is a late season race so I would have all season to train.

Unfortunately, Florida sold out in only four hours the day after the race. I did not want to wait till 2007 so I went looking for other options. This is how I found out about multisports.com. They offer package deals on training that include a race entry, which is how I ended up with coaches and a slot.

Lunchtime Pilates mat class today. Plan for tomorrow is early morning swim.

**10/13/2006**

### **All Tuned Up**

This morning's swim workout:

Warm-up: 100, 2x500fg, 2x50

Main set: 8x200 (alternate fast/easy)

Cool-down: 12x100

Total swim distance 4000 yds, total swim time 1h18.

Picked up my bike from Rob yesterday. He tuned it up and put on some new tires. The new tires are bright yellow! This should make it easier for Y to spot me as I head into T2. Old tires were actually in good shape but there are enough things that can go wrong during an Ironman that I decided not to take a chance on them.

Joyce did a great job of fixing up my shoulder last night. I had slept badly on it last week and it had been bothering me.

If you're going to do this kind of thing it is important that you have good support. I consider myself very fortunate to have an iron spouse, excellent mechanic and massage therapist, and lots of great training buddies.

Not only is my bike all tuned up and ready to go, I am too!

Plan for tomorrow is easy 3 hour ride followed by 20 min transition run.

### **10/14/2006**

#### **Fall is in the Air**

Yes, it was a bit crisp this morning but what a great day for a ride! It was bright and sunny and all the leaves are turning magnificent colors. Javier and I did a nice 52.5 mile figure eight from SUNY with Bedford at the center. The bottom of the loop went through Armonk, Greenwich, and Glenville. Top of the loop included Caramoor and Pound Ridge. This was Javier's first 50+ mile ride. He is new to triathlon and is clearly hooked. It is interesting how this sport does that to people. Next year his plan is to do a half IM or two and I don't think he will have any problem with that.

Some of my other friends bailed on us this morning. They said that they had too much to do but I think that it might have been too cold for them. The trick to riding when it is cold out is to dress properly. I was nice and toasty today because I had on tights, long sleeve base layer, booties, gloves (w/fingers), skullcap, and jacket. When it gets even colder I just need to add a few more layers, balaclava, lobster mitts and most important heated insoles. Pretty much the only thing that keeps me off the road in winter is ice.

Total ride time today was 3h36 and the pace was 15.2 mph. Followed up ride with short, 0h18, transition run.

Plan for tomorrow is 75-90 min run followed by 60 min recovery ride.

### **10/15/2006**

#### **Pump up the Volume!**

What a beautiful fall day for a run. It was nice and crisp at 8:00 am this morning with the thermometer hovering at 38 degrees. Eight of the WTC crew showed up. Some of the trails in the Rockies were closed so we made it up as we ran. Mark was out-front most of the way and it seems he managed to find just about every hill around. Janis calls this group the fast guys and they did not disappoint. We ran 10 miles in 1h28 at a pace of 8:43. Even Mimi showed up today in a full SBR kit getting in a last long run before Hawaii next week.

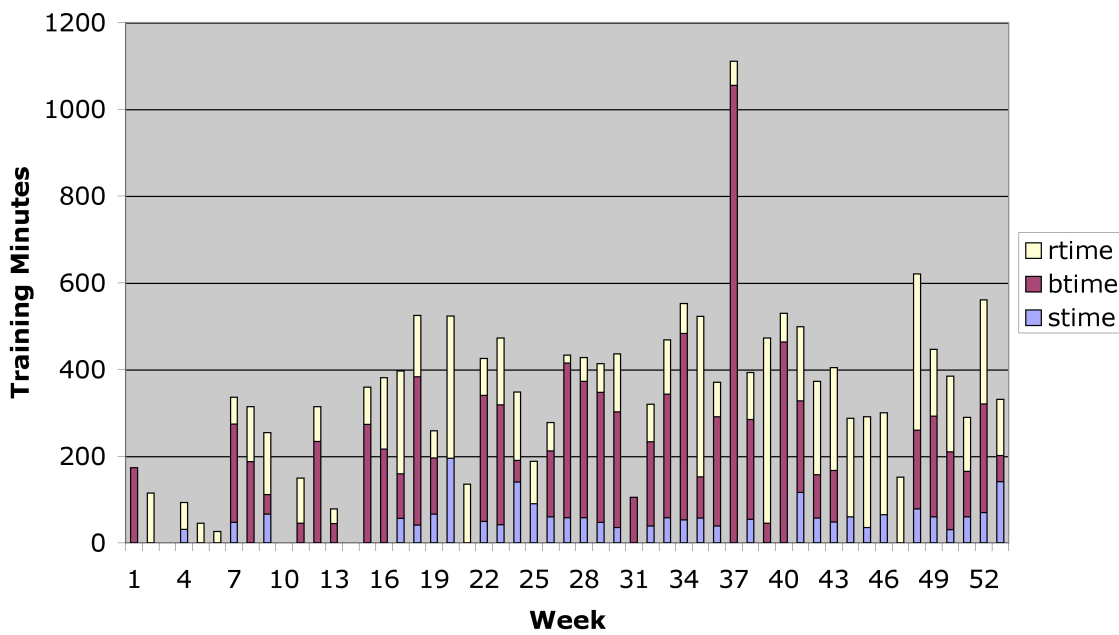
Jumped on the bike for a recovery ride on the bike path. Total ride distance was 14.6 miles, ride time 1h03, pace was and easy 13.9 mph.

This brings my last recovery week to a close. Cumulative totals for the week are:

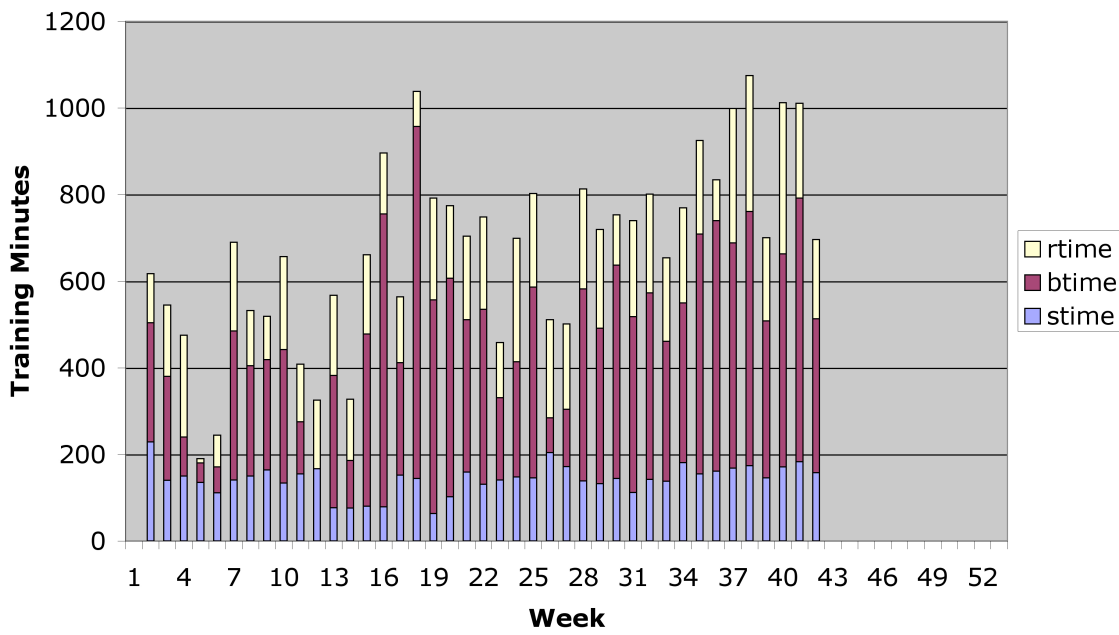
Swim:	2h38
Bike:	5h55
Run:	3h03
<b>Total:</b>	<b>11h36</b>

Looking back at my training log I see that my recovery week volume this year is actually more than what my regular training volume was last year. The graphs below show weekly time spent swimming, biking, and running in 2005 and 2006, respectively. As you can see, I have really pumped up the volume this year increasing the amount of time spent training on a weekly basis by about a factor of two

## Training Time (2005)



## Training Time (2006)



Next week the taper begins. Plan for tomorrow is evening turbo brick workout.

**10/16/2006**

### **Mathematically Challenged?**

The taper started off with a nasty little turbo torture session. It seemed to just go on and on lasting long enough that I was able to watch Versus coverage of Ironman Arizona, Ironman Couer d'Alene, and half of the Nautica Malibu triathlon. My coaches advertised this as a 75 minute session but I think that they must be mathematically challenged as it clocked in at 108 minutes. Go ahead and do the math yourself:

Warm-up: 20 min

Main set: 5 x (2 min hard, 2 min easy), 3 x (5 min hard, 2 min easy), 3 x (3 min hard, 2 min easy), 3 x (2 min hard, 2 min easy)

Cool-down: 20 min

Even if I did the minimum warm-up and cool-down the workout would still have been 98 minutes. Maybe they don't count the 2 easy minutes between intervals? Or maybe this is one of the reasons that they ended up as coaches instead of accountants...

Completed brick with 30 min transition run. Was inspired by Michael Lavato and ran like a machine. Total run distance 3.5 miles, pace 8:29.

Plan for tomorrow is evening swim if I can get away from work at a decent hour.

**10/17/2006**

### **Swim Ladder**

Swimming in the evening has its advantages and disadvantages. On the pro side it can be less stressful since you are not rushing because you have a train to catch. On the con side it can be stressful to try and get away early enough and if you time it badly you end up at the pool on one of those nights where they have swim lessons for the kids. Tonight I was

lucky in that it was not so hard to get away and there were no swim lessons.

Had the clever idea to grab a slice to eat on the train so that I would have something in my system while swimming. Even though almost an hour had passed by the time I hit the water I had not sufficiently digested the pizza and was somewhat uncomfortable all through my warm-up. (Note to self: pizza is better after a workout!)

When I get a good rhythm going I can zone and my subconscious takes over. One of the things that popped into my head tonight was the notion that I might just run IMFL without a watch. Why not just go out and have fun and completely ignore my pace, splits, even heart rate? It was a great fantasy for a while and then I realized that my nutrition plan depends on my taking on calories on a regular schedule (i.e. every 15 min). I have always raced and trained with a watch. Chances are not having one would probably be more distracting than anything else. The heart rate monitor, on the other hand, is something that I try always to train with but frequently race without. I am still undecided if I will wear it this time around.

The workout tonight can probably best be described as a swim ladder:

Warm-up: 100, 8x25, 4x50, 2x100, 8x50

Main set: 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 400, 300, 200, 100

Cool-down: 12x25, 100

Total swim distance 4000 yds, total swim time 1h15. Had someone in the lane next to me pacing me for the 400s which was kind of fun...

Managed to slip in a Pilates mat class at lunch today. Plan for tomorrow is long interval run.

**10/18/2006**

### **Reservoir Loops**

What a lovely evening for a run. The Central Park Reservoir is probably one of the nicest and most popular running routes in NYC. The view across the reservoir in the direction of CP south is really stunning. The loop is 1.58 miles around according to the Central Park website. It is lit at about 50 yard intervals making it perfect for an evening jog. The reservoir spans the park from 86<sup>th</sup> street to 96<sup>th</sup> street and holds a billion gallons of water.

Tonight was a pretty serious interval workout:

Warm-up: 15 min, stretch

Main set: 5 x (5 min hard, 3 min moderate)

Cool-down: 18 min

Total run distance 8.6 miles, total run time 1h14, average pace 8:34. I guess that I must have really pushed it on the intervals to end up with an overall average like that...

Plan for tomorrow is long early morning swim.

**10/19/2006**

### **IM Bags**

Got e-mail the other day from [Paula Newby Fraiser](#). She is a pretty amazing lady. With 24 career IM victories including 8 at Kona no other triathlete even comes close to her. I can't even imagine how many IM races she has completed. Looks like I'm going to get to meet her in Florida. I guess that this is one of the perks that come with a high priced training plan + race entry.

The e-mail was all about registration logistics. Unlike shorter triathlons where you organize your own transition area, IM races have transition tents so that you have the opportunity to change your clothes. This means that you do not have the luxury of having all of your stuff in one place. With IM races you get five bags that will be distributed around the course:

Dry clothes bag - clothes to change into at the end of the race

T1: swim-to-bike bag - helmet, sunscreen, sunglasses, bike clothes, etc.

Special Needs bike bag - anything you might need at the halfway point on the bike, nutrition, extra tube and cartridge, etc.

T2: bike-to-run bag - running shoes, visor, run clothes, etc.

Special Needs run bag - long sleeve shirt, nutrition, etc.

Some of the bags have to be dropped off the day before the race, the rest you bring with you race morning. I think that I am going to have to take a page from Y's book and use a spread sheet to keep track of what I need to pack.

I was a little late getting started but I had a nice swim this morning:

Warm-up: 100, 1000fg

Main set: 7x400

Cool-down: 1000, 100

Unfortunately, SwiMP3 batteries gave up half way though main set. Total swim distance 5000 yds, total swim time 1h38.

Plan for tomorrow is rest day.

**10/20/2006**

### **Redneck Riviera**

With the trip to Florida rapidly approaching, I thought it prudent to confirm all my reservations. I am really glad that I did because many of these were made almost a year ago and some things have changed. The management company that I rented the condo from has been acquired and it required a number of calls and considerable persistence before they were able to pull my reservation out of the old system. We will be staying at the [Twin Palms Resort](#) a new condo located about a half mile from the race hotel. I had booked a room at the race hotel but later learned that they put triathletes in the old part of the hotel and that this was the kind of establishment favored by spring break crowds.

Picture bunk beds chained to the wall and you get the idea.

It turned out that our flight schedule had changed as well and they needed to reissue our tickets. We will be going down on Wednesday so that I have plenty of time to register and try to relax. Our return flights are on Tuesday so hopefully I will have had a good chance to recover before having to return to work.

I am sending the bike to Florida using [tribiketransport.com](http://tribiketransport.com). Heather got an e-mail from them with logistics and I got zip so I dug up my receipt to make sure that I really had signed up, and then contacted them to get details and confirm my reservation. It turns out that all the logistics were there on the web site all along and I just need to look in the right place. (Can you imagine they actually hid this information under a tab labeled logistics no less.) I will need to drop off my bike, sans pedals, at SBR by noon on Saturday the 28th.

No complications with Avis, they happily confirmed my reservation for an SUV.

I'm not really sure what to expect. The chamber of commerce claims that [Panama City Beach](#) is one of the world's most beautiful beaches with 27 miles of sugary white sand and emerald waters. On the other hand, it is also known as the Redneck Riviera because most of its visitors are from neighboring Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi. Most of the feedback that I have gotten from people who have been there has conditioned me to set my expectations low.

Plan for tomorrow is 3.5-4.5 hour ride followed by 30-40 min transition run.

**10/21/2006**

### **Hawaii Ironman**

Today is the Hawaii Ironman. This is where it all started. It is where Julie Moss crawled across the line and the Ironman was indelibly writ on our collective conscious. Two acquaintances of mine are out there today:

Martin and Mimi. When I checked a couple of minutes ago on [ironmanlive.com](http://ironmanlive.com) they had both passed the 5 mile marker on the bike. Their swim splits were almost the same and they were within 6 places of each other overall. Mimi is there for her third time and Martin his second. To get to Hawaii you either have to win the lottery or qualify. To qualify you need to finish pretty high up in your age group. Martin qualified at IMLP and Mimi at IMCDA. Both of them are amazing athletes!

I have no Hawaii aspirations but one of the WTC guys I have been training with does (Rich). He has been putting in an unbelievable amount of effort into his training, easily double what I've been doing. I'm really hoping that he has a great race and is able to qualify.

Hooked up with the WCC B+ ride today led by Dave and Robin; we road out of Chappaqua and headed north. I was surprised to see Rob, Tommy, and Jen there. It was great to see them but I was concerned that they would push the pace (which they of course did). Beautiful day for a ride, not too cold and the fall colors are really popping. Hilly ride today but I felt pretty good and was able to keep up with the fast group. It was supposed to be a 50 miler but it ended up short, closer to 45 miles. I needed to do 3.5-4.5 hours so I headed back out for more. I did a nice little loop that took me out to route 100 so I could really crank on the flats. Total ride time was 4h04, total ride distance 66.6 miles for a pace of 16.9 mph.

When I got back I headed out for a transition run. Ended up running from Chappaqua to Pleasantville and back. Total run time was 0h33, total run distance 3.9 miles for a pace of 8:25.

Plan for tomorrow is 70-80 minutes long run followed by 60 minute recovery ride.

**10/22/2006**

**Great Races All Around!**

Last year Normann Stadler had nothing but bad luck at Hawaii. The defending champ had two flat tires that put him out of contention. This year luck was with him as he decimated the field on the bike setting a new course record. Chris McCormack, however, chased him down on the run and nearly caught him. At the finish there was only 71 seconds between the two. The woman's race was no less interesting. Michellie Jones a young upstart who has only run Hawaii once before upset the reigning champ Natascha Badmann, by over 20 minutes. Martin and Mimi also had great races finishing in 10:49 and 11:51, respectively. I'm really looking forward to watching this when it is broadcast and cannot believe there was no mention of the race whatsoever in The NY Times this morning.

Today my friend Janis ran the Mystic County Marathon. Her goal was to run in under 4:01 in order to qualify for Boston. I just got off the phone with one very happy woman who not only managed to qualify but also did so with about 5 minutes to spare! I'm really thrilled because I know how much this means to her.

Ran with the WTC in the Rockies this morning. The whole Florida group was out and then some. There are five of us: Rich and Tommy are the veterans while Heather, Todd and I are all first timers. Everybody is looking lean and mean. Everybody is ready. I'm sure that we are all going to have great races! We ran the first hour at about the most relaxed pace I can recall. The next thirty minutes or so was significantly more aggressive. Total run time today was 1h31, run distance was 9.6 miles for a pace of 9:30.

Did my recovery ride out of the house today. It was more or less an out and back on Route 22 North. Added a little loop at the top that follows the Gimbel's route for a bit. The

group doing the long ride shot by at one point and I thought about trying to keep up but only for a moment. Total ride time was 1h14, total ride distance was 16.4 for a pace of 13.6 mph.

It didn't feel at all like a taper week. This is perhaps because last week was a recovery week and this week the total volume was up. Cumulative totals for the week are:

Swim:	2h53
Bike:	7h06
Run:	3h48
<b>Total:</b>	<b>13h47</b>

Next week the taper continues. Plan for tomorrow is turbo brick workout.

**10/23/2006**

**Penultimate Turbo**

Turbo brick tonight. Only one more turbo workout to go before the big dance! You know how much I'm going to miss these... Distracted myself by watching the Verses coverage of 2006 Ironman Lake Placid on the TiVo. Since I was there as a spectator it was extra cool to watch it on the tube. Unfortunately, I did not see anybody I know.

Workout consisted of:

Warm-up: 20 min, 8 x (30 sec fast, 30 sec easy)

Main set: 6 x (4 min hard, 1 min moderate), 4 x (20 sec fast, 40 sec easy)

Cool-down: 15 min

Total bike time 1h17. Transition run was short and sweet at 0h16.

Plan for tomorrow is early morning swim.

**10/24/2006**

**6.8% Body Fat**

We had a health fair at work today. Got flu shot, cholesterol checked, blood pressure checked, and body fat measured. While my blood pressure is higher than I would like, my body fat percentage could not be better. The monitor claimed that I have 6.8% body fat. I'm not sure that I believe it but it sure sounds good!

This reminds me about a time when I was riding with some friends and the subject of weight came up. One said that she did not even have a scale. The other said that she only allowed herself to check her weight once per week. I on the other hand am a geek who checks his weight every morning and writes it down. Every so often I transfer the data to a spreadsheet so that I can calculate moving averages and make graphs. What does the data tell me? Well, first that my weight fluctuates day over day by about 3 lb. Second, since beginning my IM training program I have lost about 5 lbs. Lastly, that since the beginning of 2001, about when I got back into triathlon, I have lost approximately 15 lbs.

Early morning swim today:

Warm-up: 200, 6x50fg, 200fg

Main set: 600, 6x100, 400, 8x50, 400, 16x25

Cool-down: 6x50, 200

Total swim distance 4000 yds, total swim time 1h14.

Intervals in Central Park tomorrow evening.

### **10/25/2006**

#### **A Run in the Park**

Just one week to go before we head to Florida! I'm starting to feel a little stressed, as there is much to do in this last week. I will probably feel better though once I drop my bike off and get started on my packing.

Got e-mail yesterday from my good friend Paula with lots of excellent last minute advice and an invitation to actually meet her and one of my coaches on Thursday morning so that I would have a chance to ask any last minute questions, etc.

Today I got an e-mail from the race organizers with a link to the [Athlete Guide](#). It has the schedule in it for the weekend, a couple of checklists, course maps, and a summary of the more important rules (e.g. no public nudity). The e-mail also contained a link to the [Spectator Guide](#) which I will pass on to Y.

Did a Hatha yoga class at lunch today. It has been a while since I did any yoga and it felt pretty good.

Tonight Michael and I ran in Central Park. We did some short but intense fartleks:

Warm-up: 20 min

Main set: 6 x (2 min hard, 2 min moderate)

Cool-down: 17 min

Total run time was 1h01, total run distance 7.1 miles.

Early morning swim tomorrow.

### **10/26/2006**

#### **The Swim**

The swim for me in Florida should be the easiest part. I am a good swimmer and the combination of salt water and a wet suit ought to allow me to skim the surface like a surfboard. Nevertheless, I still have concerns about the mass start. I have done much smaller races with a mass start so know what it is like to hit the water with a few hundred other triathletes but never with a few thousand. Even for the smaller races I usually start well to the side to avoid the melee in the center and still I get kicked and hit plenty. One important thing I have learned from all of this is to put my goggles on before I put on my swim cap. This way if they get knocked off I am less likely to lose them.

I have not yet mastered the art of getting a good draft on the swim. There were a couple of races that I lucked out and caught the feet of a fast swimmer as they went by but most races I'm left to fend for myself and pull other swimmers along. Seems the fast swimmers that I want to draft are usually already away and what is the point of drafting off of a slower swimmer. Could be that starting well to the side makes finding a good draft harder but I guess this is a sacrifice I am willing to make.

Workout this morning consisted of:

Warm-up: 100, 800

Main set: 2x500, 3x300, 6x100

Cool-down: 800, 100

Total swim distance 4300 yds, total swim time 1h17.

Rest day tomorrow.

## **10/27/2006**

### **The Bike**

The bike composes the largest part of the race. Lots of things can go wrong on the bike. From flat tires to chafing to getting your nutrition right the bike may just be the most challenging part of the race. With Florida being a pretty flat course there are no hills to space out riders and I am told it is hard to avoid packs. I will not deliberately try and draft off of any other riders, however, I am not going to sweat it if I am overtaking or being overtaken by a pack of riders.

The weather looks like it will be pretty warm. The forecast is for a high of 75 and a low of 52. I am planning on wearing a tri singlet and maybe some arm warmers for the start of the ride.

I will be carrying a spare tube, CO2 cartridges, patches, and probably a mini tool and have a spare tire, tube, and more cartridges in my special needs bag. If I need more than this I will probably have to rely on help from a technician.

For nutrition I will have two 1000 calorie carbo-pro bottles plus a bottle of water to start. In addition, I plan to have some gel shots as backup. Along the ride I plan to take bottles of water and maybe the occasional banana as hand ups. In my special needs bag I will also have another 1000 calorie bottle as backup. In addition, I will be taking some electrolyte tablets in a specially modified film canister.

Since the course is supposed to be pretty flat there, I am told that I will have to create my own hills by periodically shifting to a higher gear and coming out of the saddle. I guess this is designed to break the monotony of the grind and give your butt a break. If chafing becomes an issue, I will have a couple of packets of chamois cream, one with me and one in my special needs bag.

Wind may be a factor on the bike. Last year the last 12 miles were pretty miserable. My plan is to try and negative split the bike. Take it easy for the first half and then pick it up a bit in the second half. I don't want to hammer the bike though and have nothing left for the run.

Plan for the weekend is complicated and will require me to be somewhat dynamic. I have to drop off my bike by noon tomorrow in Manhattan so it looks like I will need to do my workout in the afternoon. The weather forecast for tomorrow is for heavy rain and partly cloudy/windy on Sunday. Unless it clears in the afternoon, it might be prudent for me to get my run in Saturday and do the long ride on Sunday.

## **10/28/2006**

### **The Run**

Dropped off my bike and most of my gear this morning at SBR. It will make its way down to Florida by truck and hopefully be there when I arrive. It is hard to believe that the race is now just a week away.

Some people say that the Ironman begins at mile 80 on the bike. For me I think it will be mile 13 of the run. The run is a flat double out and back along the coast. The last out and back will determine if I have a good day or a bad day. If I'm having a good day I will have saved enough to run the whole thing. If I'm having a bad day this is where I'm likely to blow up. I am pretty confident at this point that I will be able to complete the race in the allotted time. The real question is will I have to walk some of the run and if so how much?

I have run two open marathons. The first was NYC in 2003 where I hit the wall really hard around mile 19 and had to walk all the water stops for the rest of the race. In 2005, I ran Philadelphia without ever hitting the wall. The last few miles were a bitch and I had to go deep to stay on pace but I ran the whole thing. This will not be an open marathon; I will be starting with tired legs. On the other hand, I'm not trying to set a marathon PR only to run the whole thing. I'm hoping that I have enough discipline to dial it back enough during the first half so that I will be able to run the whole second half.

It rained really hard this morning and again in the afternoon but I managed to slip an hour long run in between. Ran in the Rockies by myself. It was really beautiful with the trails covered in multi-colored leaves. Unfortunately, I did not derive the maximum pleasure from today's run because I spent much of the run afraid that those same leaves would obscure a rock or twig that would cause me to turn an ankle. Luckily I survived unscathed but it probably was not the most prudent thing to do this close to the race. Total run distance 6.8 miles; total run time 0h57 for a pace of 8:29.

Did my recovery ride on the trainer because of the rain. Watched the 2005 IMFL coverage yet again on the TiVo and practiced visualizing myself out there on the course. Total ride time 1h00.

Plan for tomorrow is 2-3 hour ride followed by 10-15 min transition run.

### **10/29/2006**

#### **Trick or Treat**

Rode with the WCC B+ group out of Bedford this morning. Mark Lubin led the ride which he called "Trick or Treat?" and suggested that there might be a little of both. As it usually happens when there was no A ride on the schedule, a bunch of A riders were there slumming with us. Or perhaps because it is so close to Halloween they were in need of some

fresh blood. It was quite a ride actually, lots of hills, plenty of debris on the road from the storm, and some serious wind gusts. Was not such a great day to be hammering but it seems that I must be in the mood to tempt fate this weekend. In the end the pace was more like an A- ride. Total ride time was 3h00; total ride distance was 42.6 miles for a pace of 16.3 mph.

Skipped Bruce's pro-offered homebrew to do a 15 min transition run, at this point I will probably abstain from drinking any more alcohol till after the race.

This brings the second taper week to a close. Cumulative workout totals for the week are shown below:

Swim:	2h31
Bike:	5h17
Run:	2h29
<b>Total:</b>	<b>10h17</b>

Less than a week to go now. Final week of taper will be pretty light. So far the taper is going very well. In the past I have gone through lots of head games during my tapers: everything hurts, I feel exhausted after a short run and wonder how the hell I'm going to be able to run a full marathon, etc. I have been really trying to keep a positive attitude and enjoy the taper and so far it is working...

Tomorrow I will probably run 30-40 min in the AM and then spin on the trainer for 60-90 min in the PM.

### **10/30/2006**

#### **What it Takes**

Got up at 5:30 so I could run this morning. Seems that if your hobby is triathlon you have to get used to a lot of early mornings. Ran a 4.4 mile loop from the house which included one loop around the Kensico Dam Plaza and climb to the top. Total run time was 0h38 for a pace of 8:38.

Watched a very nicely done documentary called "[What it Takes](#)" on DVD last night. It

follows four very famous Triathletes (Peter Reid, Luke Bell, Lori Bowden, and Heather Fuhr) throughout their 2005 seasons. The file also contained lots of cameos and commentary from a veritable Who's Who Ironman list. I really enjoyed it and highly recommend it.

This evening set up the trainer in the living room for the last time before the race. Did easy spin while watching 2006 IM Wisconsin. Did not realize that they had to endure such cold wet weather. We are really lucky to have such an excellent forecast (sunny 71/49). Total bike time tonight was 1h26.

Lots of encouraging e-mails have been coming in all weekend and I really appreciate every one of them! Early morning swim is on the schedule for tomorrow.

### **10/31/2006**

#### **PCB or Bust!**

Quite a pleasant workout this morning:

Warm-up: 100, 500fg

Main set: 2x1000

Cool-down: 500, 100

Total swim time 0h59; total swim distance 3200 yds. It was not so long ago that this would have taken me closer to 1h04. All this swimming has clearly had a noticeable impact.

We are leaving early tomorrow for Panama City Beach so I have a lot of packing to do tonight. I meant to put together a checklist but never got to it. Luckily my coaches sent me one. We depart White Plains at 7 am, change planes in Atlanta, and arrive in PCB at 1 pm.

I plan to go for a 30-40 minute run even before I unpack to relax, get a taste of the humidity, and check out some of the run course. After that I'd really like to pick up my bike and the rest of my gear. There is lots to do during race week. I guess it is good to have plenty to distract you before a big race...

### **11/1/2006**

#### **Bib 1556**

Arrived PCB around 2 pm. Sunny today and around 80 degrees. Checked into our luxury condo and found to our delight that it is even nicer than the pictures on the web. (Scored big time brownie points with Y for that!)

Before unpacking we headed over to the IM Village to register. I was warned that tomorrow the lines could be 1-2 hours long. I believe that this could very well be the case as it was hard to find registration, the process was complicated, and it was not very well organized. My bib number is 1556. I have a package with a timing chip, a swim cap, a couple of race numbers, a lot of stickers with my bib number on them, and a slew of plastic bags.

After registering, we headed over to pick up my bike from tribike transport. Put my pedals on, pumped up the tires and rode back to the condo to make sure everything was ok -- it was. Compared to boxing the bike and flying it with me this was a breeze!

Y met me back at the condo and before I would let her unpack, I made her drive me out to the end of the run course. We did not actually go all the way to the end because it is in the State Park, instead I had her drop me off at Irwin Street. Ran back to the condo following the run course. Total run time 0h42, run distance 4.8 miles for a pace of 8:48.

This place is thick with triathletes. It is hard to shake a stick without hitting a dozen of them. I'm guessing that only a third of them are here at this point. Ran into Peter and Carl as I ran by the Elite tent.

Plan for tomorrow is to meet with coaches at 7:00 am then swim one loop of the course. Later I will take the bike out for an hour and finish up with a 20 min run. Pasta dinner in the evening followed by mandatory race meeting.

**11/2/2006**

**Retail Therapy**

Slept great till 4 am and then could not get back to sleep. When I met with the coaches at 7 am this morning, Paula wanted to know who was nervous. That's when it hit me -- what had kept me up was not nerves but excitement. I am really looking forward to Saturday!

Coaches were great. They reassured us, motivated us, answered all our questions, fed us, and posed for photographs with us. I asked Roch about racing with a heart rate monitor. He did not think it would be useful on the run and was more open to using it on the bike. Lots of other good questions were asked and I picked up a few tid bits.

Went for an easy out and back on the swim course. The yellow buoys were a little tough to site so I had to occasionally stop to scan the horizon. Coming back in was a lot easier in this respect because I was able to use a building as a point of reference. Saw a couple of dinner plate sized pink jellyfish but luckily no stings. Total swim time 0h35.

Had pancake breakfast with some of the gang from NY/CT. Then Y and I headed back to the IM Village for some retail therapy. Have to admit that we were rather indulgent.

After lunch, I took the bike out for a spin. Easy out and back on the bike course. Wind was blowing pretty hard today. If it does not let up (or gets worse) the bike leg of this race will be seriously challenging. I went out 0h29 but it only took me 0h25 to get back. Total bike distance 16 miles for a pace of 18.4 mph.

Followed bike with 0h30 run of 3.6 miles (8:24 pace).

Tonight is carbo-load dinner and mandatory race meeting. Tomorrow is 10 min swim, 20 min bike, and 10 min run. Will also have to drop off bike and pack transition and special needs bags.

**11/3/2006**

**Ready!**

Bike and transition bags are all checked in, special needs bags are packed and now it is time to chill...

It was very windy and cold this morning. Went for a quick dip in what felt like an ice bath until I was a couple of minutes out. Given that the whole swim only lasted 0h11 it almost does not seem worth it.

Had a monster breakfast. Relaxed for a bit and then went for a very short 0h20 ride followed by equally short 0h11 run.

At the moment it looks like the weather will be great but that can easily change. It will be chilly in the morning and again later at night also it will be windy but hopefully not too bad.

Here are my expectations for tomorrow. I'm hoping to complete the swim in around 1h20 +/- 10 min. I expect to take about 10 min in T1. Depending on how much wind there is tomorrow, the bike could take me anywhere from 6h00 (perfect conditions) to 8h00 (cold and windy) so I'm figuring on about 7h00. T2 should be faster than T1 but I'm going to say 10 min anyway. That just leaves the run which should take 4h30 unless I blow up and have to walk some of it. So all told if I have a good day tomorrow I could be done in 13h10. This is about twice my half IM time plus two hours.

If I come in anywhere near 13 hours I will be thrilled. I have been thinking of 14 hours as my over under time. Under if I have a good race and over if I blow up. As far as I am concerned, however, the only unacceptable time is a DNF (Did Not Finish). By the way you can check my splits in real time on [ironmanlive.com](http://ironmanlive.com).

I am ready! I have five half IM races, two marathons, at least a dozen century rides, and 24 weeks of intensive training under my belt. The moment of truth is at hand. Tomorrow I am going to find out if I've got what it takes to be called an Ironman...

**11/4/2006**

**12:26:11**

NAME IRWIN SHEER

BIB NUMBER 1556

AGE 45

PROFESSION FINANCE

STATE/COUNTRY VALHALLA NY USA /

SWIM BIKE RUN OVERALL POSITION

1:14:46 6:14:55 4:34:05 12:26:11 966

RACE LEG DISTANCE PACE POSITION

TOTAL SWIM 2.4 mi. (1:14:46) 1:58/100m 876

TOTAL BIKE 112 mi. (6:14:55) 17.92 mph 1132

FIRST RUN SEGMENT 13.1 mi. (2:10:51) 9:59/mile

RUN FINISH 13.1 mi. (2:23:14) 10:56/mile

TOTAL RUN 26.2 mi. (4:34:05) 10:27/mile 966

TRANSITION TIME

T1: SWIM-TO-BIKE 15:04

T2: BIKE-TO-RUN 7:21

PENALTY TIME

TOTAL PENALTIES ---:--

It is official now, I am an IRONMAN!

Details to follow...

**11/5/2006**

### **Race Report**

Y and I walked over to transition at 5:00 when it was 37 degrees. I pumped up my tires with a borrowed floor pump and dropped off my special needs bag then we found some place warm to wait.

At 6:30 put on wet suit and dropped off warm clothes bag on the way to the beach. I went all the way to the right to try and avoid getting pummeled in the mix. We watched the pros go off at 6:50 and then at 7:00 the cannon went off for us.

Water was not as cold as Friday. I had plenty of encounters with other swimmers but luckily nothing that hurt. Starting way to the outside I probably had to swim an extra 200-400 yds but it was worth it. On to the beach, through the

arch, rinse the salt out of my mouth with a glass of water and back into the water for lap two.

The swimmers were all strung out at this point so I was able to swim the line of buoys. The cross over from the green line (outbound) to the orange line (inbound) at the top of the rectangle was really rough water which freaked a lot of people out. Later somebody even joked that the biggest hills on the course were on the swim. For me it was annoying but I swam right through it and was glad that it was short.

Out of the water with a 1h15 split. Used pullers to help me out of the wetsuit. Y was there cheering me on when I came out of the water both times.

Picked up T1 bag and headed into changing tent to find total mayhem. Took me several minutes just to find a place to change. It was still pretty chilly so I put on arm warmers and the nada. Picked up the bike and headed out. Was rather annoyed to find that my transition time was over 15 minutes but I was dressed perfectly for the weather.

At mile 7 we turned on to highway 79 and into a pretty significant head wind. I went into my small chain ring at this point and stayed there for most of the outbound portion of the bike leg. At mile 12, Ann caught up with me and we went over the bridge together. She is a stronger rider so I did not try and keep up with her.

At mile 49 we got to special needs. I stripped off the nada and picked up extra nutrition, tube, cartridges. Did not need any of it but figured it would not hurt to have the extra insurance. Just after special needs we turned on to Hwy 231 and had the wind at our backs for the first time. It was like flying! At mile 50 Scott passed me.

I was knocking back a swig of Carbo-pro every 15 minutes and then chasing it with water. The first two swigs were fine but after

that my stomach went sour. I continued to force myself to drink the Carbo-pro but I knew that there would be consequences. Not taking on the calories would probably have been a race ending mistake.

The inbound leg went much faster. This was mostly big chain ring riding. The wind was benign and occasionally it was behind us except for the short out and back where we got it both ways. At mile 80 I was thinking about how Paula says the Ironman begins at mile 80 on the bike. At mile 100 we went over the bridge and I realized that I had just ridden my fastest century at 5h39. The last 12 miles was very familiar and I sailed right past Y into transition with a 6h15 bike split. If you compare outbound with inbound splits the difference was over 20 minutes because of the wind.

I went harder on the bike than I had planned and was worried that this would hurt my run. But I knew that I now had over nine hours to complete the marathon and come what may I knew I could do that.

T2 was butter and I was out on the run course in half the time it took me in T1. Y was there again to cheer me on as I left transition.

Except for intestinal distress that would dog me for the first half of the run. I was in great shape till mile 5. Here I started feeling the energy low that precedes a bonk. So at mile 5 I did my first gel shot. A few miles later the same. In the end I sort of ate my way through the entire marathon. Unfortunately, this was not as enjoyable as it sounds; my stomach was not quite right and I was having intestinal cramps.

My plan was to try and keep my pace to about 10:00 and slow down if I had too. I did slow down on the second half but not by much. This is mostly because on the second half I was walking the water stops while I stuffed my gob.

The route is a double out and back so you get to pass each point four times. I saw both Rich and Heather as I headed back from the State Park. Rich was on his second loop and totally focused so he did not even hear me. Heather was looking strong and came across the road to trade a high five with me. The sun set as I reached the half way point so I grabbed my long sleeved shirt from my special needs bag at mile 13. Y was there to encourage me both going into and coming out of special needs.

Mile 13 was where I expected my Ironman to begin. I expected it to require all my willpower to head out for the second loop. Fortunately that turned out not to be the case. Saw Rich again as he was heading to the finish and shortly after Tommy. Both of them were in their zone and did not hear me shout out to them. It wasn't really until mile 19 or so that I was running from water stop to water stop and having to push myself to start running again after the stop.

The miles slowly ticked away and there I was headed in to the final stretch. The fans were great and they all shout out your name because it is printed on your race number. Up the ramp and past the Explorer to the finish line. Nobody ahead of me, this is my moment. I hear the announcer say "Irwin Sheer from Valhalla, New York" and then I hear the words that I have been waiting so long to hear and will remember forever:

**"You are an Ironman!"**