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NEWSLETTERS

MERE MORTALS

CONTACT

August 1, 2021

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**Humana.**



Greetings!

*When I first moved to Pensacola, everyone I met in the running community raved about the Double Bridge Run and insisted it was the "must do" race of Pensacola. Now I don't know if it was the hype (because whenever there are rave reviews, you have high expectations, right?), or the fact that it was bitterly cold, or the fact that I was bitter watching all the runners in front of me ditch their clothes and trash either on the bridge - where it was sure to blow off the bridge in to the water - or just directly over the side of the bridge in to the water, but I was left very disappointed. Disclaimer: this is not a reflection on the Double Bridge Run nor it's organizers (Pensacola Sports is a great group) and should not be taken that way. It just wasn't the race for me.*

*Fast forward a few years and I was running the Blackwater 50K (Running Wild – also a fabulous group) and ran in to a friend who usually dominates in the field. Only, he wasn't running. He was volunteering. Again, I didn't get it. "What are you doing handing out water when you could be winning this race?" I asked. He explained that he made it a goal that for as many races as he competes in during a year, he strives to volunteer for an equal number of races. Given he was at the turnaround point on the race, I had another 15 or so miles to reflect on this concept. Hmmm...*

*I continued to hear enthusiastic remarks about Double Bridge and I thought, "Maybe there's another way for me to enjoy this race. What if I volunteer for it instead of race it?" So I signed up as a volunteer. I showed up early and learned that I'd be stationed at the results table and as runners finished the race, they could come to me to get a print out of their results and stats. I saw old friends. I saw new friends. I saw people who PR'd and were psyched about their times. I saw people who were bummed about their performance. I saw people who were running that distance for the first time and were in a state of disbelief at what they'd just achieved. I saw families creating memories together. I saw people who had traveled from far and wide to run this race – as they do every year. In short – I saw it all! I got to experience it all! And I LOVED it!! This was now the race for me...as a volunteer, not a runner. (It also didn't hurt that I got to stay warm in my puffy jacket and drink a mimosa – none of which I could have done while running 😊)*

*All of this was a long story to encourage each of you to pick a race and volunteer. It doesn't have to be as extreme as "one volunteer gig for each race*



MASSAGE THERAPY BY  
JAMES FRITSCHLE



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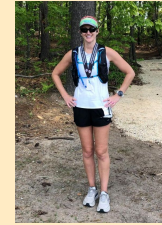


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you run." Start small. One race a year... One Mere Mortals Sunday a year... [We've got a great opportunity coming up with the Seafood Festival 5K where TGC has been asked to support a water stop.](#) It's a ton of fun. You meet great people. You get a completely different perspective than you would have gotten otherwise ([see my note in last month's newsletter](#)). You're giving back to your own athletic community. It's a win-win. I hope you consider it and have as great an experience as I did.

Until next time,  
Dani

Dani Hoffmann  
TGC President, 2021



## IN THIS NEWSLETTER

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## Kraken Youth Triathlon Team

### Kraken's Take on the Freedom Springs Triathlon

The Freedom Springs Triathlon has been a local favorite for 35 years. This race takes place in Marianna, Florida at Blue Springs State Park around the 4th of July holiday. The race is a 400 yard swim, 10 mile bike, and 5K run through the countryside of Jackson County. The kids' race has not been held for several years and the organizers opened a family division where someone must stay with the young athletes.



With the water temperature at 68 degrees for the swim and gnats flying in the air, Kraken's Tremaine and Dennis lined-up last to race. The cold water was not a factor

for these two athletes, yet the lake grass was not Tremaine's cup of tea.

Dennis and Tremaine quickly got out of the wetsuits and headed out on the bike. The course being 10 miles long gave them plenty of time to talk about video games and game strategy. The rolling hills gave them plenty of chances to be kids and ride FAST downhill.

As temperatures rose and the bugs got nasty, the two headed off on the run. At this race the first part of



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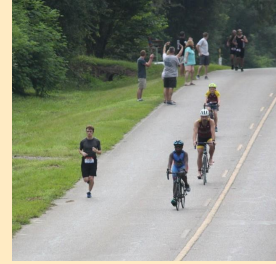
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Newsletter!

Submit an Article

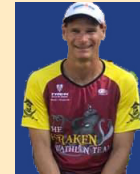
the run is uphill then down a dirt hill. The run was more like a walk/run with a turnaround at the water stop. When they finished the race, they were happy that they did something that not everyone completed this year. They also did their first adult distance triathlon.



Up next for the Kraken Team, as we speed towards the school year, is the Lakeside Country Club Kid's Triathlon in New Orleans on August 8th.

Also, the [Zarzur Law Sea Turtle Triathlon CLINIC](#) takes place August 21.

The kids practice 2-3 times a week from 4:30-5:30 pm. If you would like your young athlete to start enjoying triathlon, email [Coach Steven Fair](#).



EMAIL COACH FAIR



Mere Mortals is dependent upon Volunteers. If you, friends, or family can help, we can use you!

Throughout the summer, we need and entire squad of in-water and on-land support to keep things running smoothly.

MERE MORTALS  
VOLUNTEERS

## Tapering

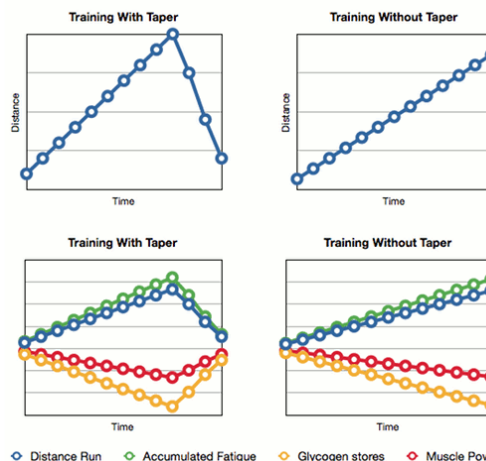
*Credit where Credit is Due: This piece is heavily borrowed from "Taper Time" written by Sarah Barker in the July/August 2021 edition of Triathlete magazine.*

I have two speeds, "go" and "stop". So the concept of "tapering" is hard for me to grasp, much less apply properly. For years, I built up my mileage and then simply went into "rest" mode before an event to let my body heal and recover so I felt fresh on race day. But more and more research indicates this may not be the best plan.

For those unfamiliar with the term, the technical definition of tapering is "a progressive, nonlinear reduction of the training load during a variable period of time that is intended to reduce physiological and psychological stress and optimize sport performance."

In simpler terms, it is the period right before a peak race that allows you to shed the accumulated fatigue from weeks or months of hard training and top up glycogen (energy) stores, while maintaining the sharp edge of that hard-won fitness so you can be your best and fastest when the gun goes off.

A taper is valuable because after a substantial period of progressively hard





training designed to place more and more stress on your body, by easing off the pedal, your body gets busy adapting which should translate into better performance.

Tapering is not as simple as just settling into the couch two weeks before an event and eating doughnuts. That would be too easy. There are four variables that need to be manipulated. These variables are taper duration, volume, frequency, and intensity.



**Taper duration** is a little tricky. Conventional wisdom would dictate the longer the race, the longer the taper duration. While I subscribe to this theory, training intensity plays a huge role as well. The more intense your training, the longer your taper needs to be. In fact, for an individual who is participating in an event just to enjoy the experience and cross it off his or her bucket list, there may be no real need for a taper. But, for an athlete that is aiming for a PR or preparing for

a potentially grueling event, the taper duration needs to be a consideration. Eight to 14 days is the general census, but some participants have benefited from tapers ranging as little to three days up to four weeks.

**Training volume** should be reduced by 40% to 60% over your pre-taper peak. For illustration, if you are training 10 to 12 hours per week at the peak of your plan, you should ultimately reduce it to four to seven hours per week.

**Frequency.** Fun fact: numerous studies indicate it is best to reduce training frequency minimally, if at all. If you routinely train five days per week, continue to do so throughout your taper but making the sessions shorter. You may want to eliminate “two-a-days” but frequent training keeps muscle memory sharp and prevents detraining.

Apply the same concept to **intensity**. If you are utilizing interval training, continue during your taper but shorten the distance and include longer recovery periods between intervals. Brief tangent, there is considerable evidence that interval training is extremely effective in endurance sports. More and more training plans include consistent interval training. We may expound on that in a future article but if you are curious, you may want to get with a local coach.

Another consideration. Running is the hardest triathlon discipline on the body. Many experts recommend cutting running volume first, then biking volume and then swimming volume.



Finally, let's put some numbers on this. For an Olympic or Sprint distance triathlon a general taper plan may look like this:

- If you've put in more than six weeks of high-volume and/or high-intensity training, this is a high priority race, or you are showing signs of fatigue (listen to your body!) start tapering 14 days out. Reduce running volume by 40% and sprinkle in a few intervals.
- At 10 days out, ease up on the weights if you lift (I do) but continue with mobility work. Reduce the volume in the bike or swimming disciplines.
- At 7 days out reduce the bike volume but insert a few short intervals.
- With 4 days left chose your favorite discipline and put in a 20-minute workout with a few bursts of speed work if swimming or running. If you chose the bike, try a 45-minute ride with one or two three-minute intervals of hard pedaling after 30 minutes of cruising.
- With 2 days to go try to relax and get in 30 minutes of your favorite discipline with a few short bursts.
- The day before. You're ready. Stay off your feet after an easy jog or easy spin session. Try to check out the swim venue at the same time as your wave start time so you get an idea where the sun will be.

Clearly, this is not “one-size-fits-all” but should give you some guidance.

Happy racing and be safe.

John "Fitz" Fitzgerald  
Licensed Insurance Agent  
Past-TGC President  
Ironman Triathlete

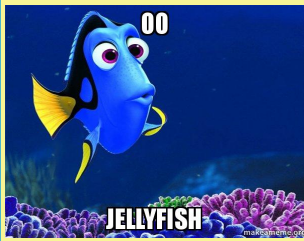


# WE NEED YOU!!

**I'm Interested**

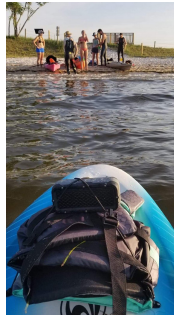
Tri Gulf Coast is a 100% volunteer run organization. Each year we look for new recruits to fill the leadership and chairperson positions. If you are interested in taking on a more active role in the club, please reach out.

## Something Just Touched Me...



Let's face it when anything touches you in the water it is one of two things: a jellyfish from depths unknown or a great white shark known as Shredder. Yep, those are the only two options... or are they!?!

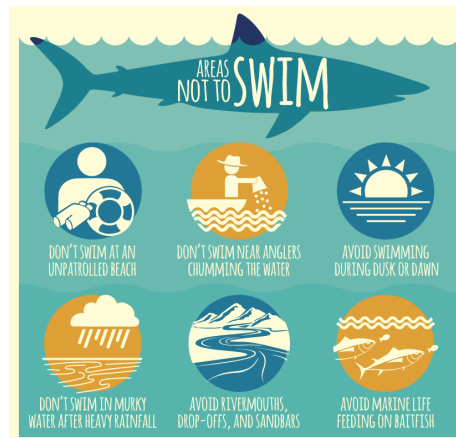
First, always swim with a buddy. There is a reason you swim first in triathlon and it's because swimming is considered the most dangerous part. Something going wrong could honestly mean life or death. If you can't find a swim buddy, find a kayak or paddle board buddy.



## Please have someone out there with you during your swim.

Second, know about where and when to swim. In our area it is advised not to swim at dusk, dawn, or nighttime. However, there are other coastal areas that post signs for safe swim times and/or locations. Be aware of your surroundings and follow local advice.

**Now that you have your safety buddy and your swim plan, let's talk about what actually lives in our local waters that you might see during your swim.**



### The Friendlier Ones

**Redfish** - typically seen where the shallow starts to drop off.



**Mojarra** - the little buggers that nip when you stand still for too long.

**Flounder** - sticking to the bottom and like to move when you are just going over the top of them.

**Black Drum** - typically we see the younger ones inshore.

**Snapper** - younger ones are seen in the grassy areas in the bays.

**Sheepshead** - typically the young ones can be seen in grassy areas.

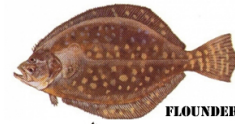
**King Mackerel** - normally they are in groups. They like to sparkle in the sunshine.

**Tarpon** - typically hang out after the first sandbar.

**Ladyfish** - they swim in big schools (because safety in numbers).

**Remora** - typically found trying to stick/attach to you.

*\*Fish illustrations not to scale.*



**FLOUNDER**



**BLACK DRUM**



**SNAPPER**



**SHEEPSHEAD**



**KING MACKEREL**



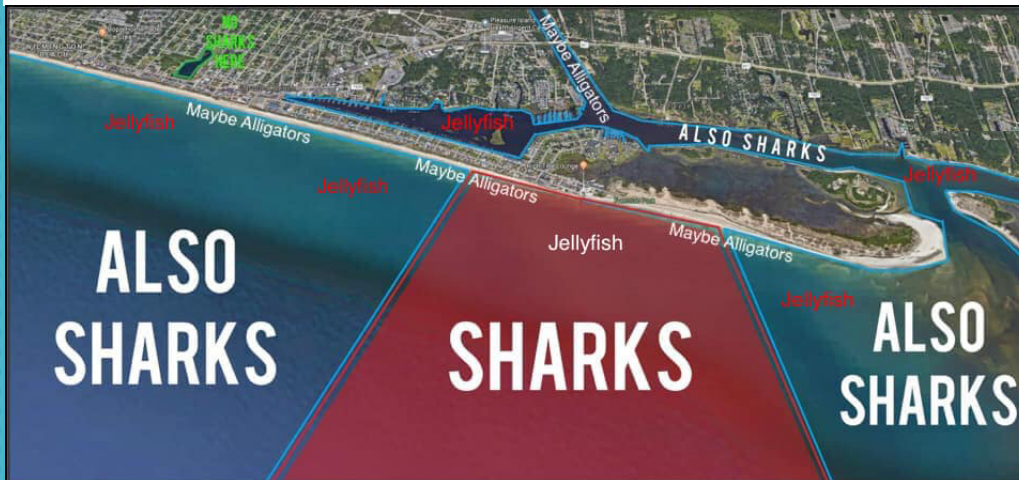
**TARPON**



**LADYFISH**



**REMORA**



**BLACKTIP**



**BULL**



**NURSE**



**TIGER**



**HAMMERHEAD**

### The Ones that Shall Not Be Named (but they really do have names)

**Local Sharks** - found anywhere the saltwater flows.

#### What should I do if I encounter one?

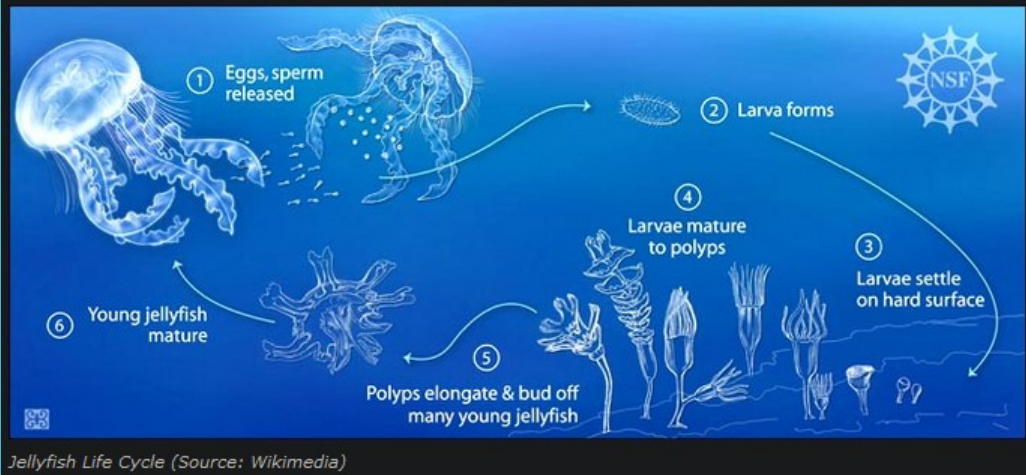
Remain calm, stay in a neutral position, get the attention of your swim buddy, and head into shore. The shark is not looking at you as food, unless you have bait hanging from your ankle.

Shark bites are not common for swimmers in our area, as we move in a predictable motion and are not thrashing around.

This doesn't mean that it can't happen, but it does mean that staying calm is the first key to avoiding a test bite.

*\*Fish illustrations not to scale.*





### Our Favorite Gelatinous Zooplankton

**Jellyfish** - found everywhere you don't want them to be.

#### What to do if you encounter one?

I hate to say it but suck it up buttercup. Jellyfish stings SUCK and can cause bad reactions.

Be aware of how you feel and if you need to alert your swim buddy to exit the water. There are many remedies for stings so you may have to test to see what works for you.

Remember you have to scrape off the stinger that hooks in when you hit a tentacle. The best way to do this is to keep an old hotel key card and use the hard card to scrape down your hit area. Remember, don't flip the card, only go in one direction, and throw the card away after use. This will remove the stingers and keep venom from continuing to be released.

*\*Jelly fish photos not to scale.*

*\*Comb jellies don't have tentacles, but they do glow!*



Teresa, LMHC  
 Licensed Mental Health Counselor  
 Mere Mortals Co-Chair  
 Endurance Swimmer

## Events



**Friday Morning Swims**, hosted by  
 Tripossibilities  
 April 16 - Splash Time: 6:30 a.m.



**Mere Mortals: Triathlon Training Program**  
 Most Sundays  
 May 30 - Sept. 19



**T3 Beach Day w/ SRITRI**  
 AFTER MERE MORTALS  
 August 8



[The O'Riley's 26.2](#) (feet)



August 14



[Argonaut 5K](#)  
August 21



[Pensacola Seafood Don McCloskey 5K](#)  
Sept. 25

**\*VOLUNTEERS NEEDED\***



[Santa Rosa Island Sprint Triathlon](#)  
October 2



[Zarzur Law Sea Turtle Youth Triathlon](#)  
October 3

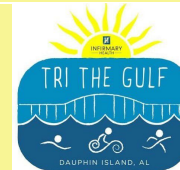
**\*VOLUNTEERS NEEDED\***



[Pensacola Half Marathon or 5K](#)  
October 10



[Tri The Gulf](#)  
October 16



[Bridge to Bridge 5K](#)  
October 16



[Krul Lake Half \(trail\)](#)  
November 20



[Pensacola Turkey Trot 5K](#)  
November 25



[Ho Ho Hustle 5K](#)  
December 11



Check these resources for local events that span our membership area and beyond.

- [Pensacola Sports: Running Pensacola](#)
- [Run Pensacola](#)
- [Pensacola Runners Association Calendar](#)
- [RunningintheUSA](#)
- [TriFind](#)
- [USA Swimming](#)



# Tri Gulf Coast Online Store



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