



TRIGULFCOAST
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NEWSLETTERS

MERE MORTALS

CONTACT

October 1, 2021

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Greetings!

Happy October! Can you believe it's October already? Which means we've closed out a successful season of Mere Mortals and SRITRI is upon us.

We were so fortunate to have an in-person Mere Mortals season this year. We saw a lot of familiar faces and made a lot of new friends too. We also saw over 100 successful finishers at MOT consisting of both seasoned triathletes and first timers. Congratulations to you all and good luck on your remaining triathlons (and other goals) this year.

*After all that hard work, some folks like to kick up their feet and celebrate... Ask and you shall receive! We have our End-of-Year Party coming up this month so save the date for 10/21. **More details coming soon.** We can't wait to celebrate all of your accomplishments in person!*

*Happy Fall youse guys!
Dani*

*Dani Hoffmann
TGC President, 2021*



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TRIATHLON TRAINING SAFETY TIPS

Mere Mortals is over for the season, but most of us continue to train into winter. It's extremely important to continue to take steps to train safely. Past-President John Fitzgerald lays out some tips!

Train smart, race smart. An adage we hear often. Most athletes interpret that to mean *put in the time and effort and your odds of having a successful race will increase*. While that is certainly valid, smart training also includes training safely. I have been training seriously for around seven years and looking at the risks I took back in the day are embarrassing. I was so focused on putting in the time that I took shortcuts that could have had serious consequences. I'll spare you the details, but



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I will share some tips I've learned as I've managed to implement to be safer while training. We'll take each discipline in order.

Open water

swimming. If you can swim with a buddy or a group that is preferable. Worst case, your significant other can stay on

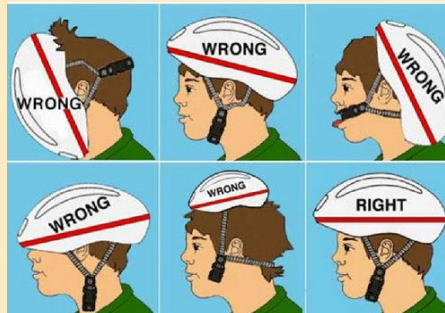


shore and keep an eye on you while you work out. Always, always wear a brightly colored swim cap so you are visible. Inflatable buoys that attach around your waist are available that further increase your visibility and can even be used as a flotation device if you encounter some type of difficulty. If you must swim solo, stick to areas that you are familiar with and follow the shoreline so you can get to a point where you can stand quickly if you need to. Mommy's Beach is an excellent venue. Lastly, if the conditions are outside your comfort zone, the water is too choppy, strong current, etc., **STAY OUT.** Pride is a poor substitute for intelligence.



The bike. Like swimming, riding with a group is always preferable. Plus, let's be honest, having conversations within the group helps fight the boredom of long rides. But I digress – back to our safety

talk. The main objective on the bike is to be seen! **TREK has done visibility studies.** Generally, bright tops and colors that clash are more readily seen by drivers. Reflective gear is imperative. I wear both passive and active reflective gear. My shoes and gloves reflect light and I attach blinking lights on the front and rear of my bike. Blinking vests are also available at a nominal cost. I wear Noxgear and love it. Never, never ride without a helmet and make sure it fits properly. Our awesome bike store sponsors can ensure a well-fitting helmet.



The run. You should be seeing a pattern by now. Run with a group or buddy if possible. (This also helps with accountability and motivation). Otherwise, common sense should be your guide. Wear bright, reflective gear. Most running shoes come with reflective gear sewn into the shoe, but various attachments are also available. Stay on the sidewalk or running path when possible. Know where you are going and stick to that route. On longer runs, make sure you bring plenty of hydration and nutrition. Equipment such as fuel belts and vests are available and if you need more information, reach out to our local sponsors or an experienced TGC'r for suggestions. [We posted some tips on YouTube last year.](#)

General tips. Always let someone know where you are going, your expected route, and an anticipated time of return. Even when I take a short run in my neighborhood, I let my wife know when I should be

ROKA

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GOOD LUCK TO
EVERYONE RACING
SRITRI THIS WEEKEND!



WE NEED YOU!!

I'm Interested

done. Carry a phone on the bike and run. They can be easily stored in a pouch or fuel belt. Also, many GPS watches now have tracking apps so you can be found easily. My wife can track me on my Garmin app so if I don't show up, she can check the app and see where I am. If your safety buddy doesn't live with you, make sure you let them know when you return so they don't end up calling the hospitals or police.



For Pete's sake, check the weather. Most endurance athletes are amateur meteorologists because we need to be prepared. If it is too hot, too cold, too windy or there is lightning around, skip the workout or train inside. Lastly, invest \$10-\$20 in a Road ID bracelet. If the worst happens and you are injured and rendered unconscious, someone looks at your information and can notify your listed contacts. Also, EMTs are trained to look for these.



There is no way to ensure against all danger, but these tips should make your training safer and help ease the minds of those that care about you. Happy racing and please let me know if I can help.



John "Fitz" Fitzgerald
(Photo with Sheila)
[Licensed Insurance Agent](#)
Past-TGC President
Ironman Triathlete

Running Heavy & Why We Should NOT Do It!

Run form – it seems like such an easy and natural concept. After all, most toddlers learn to run pretty much in conjunction with learning to walk – especially if they have an older sibling to chase! As children, we play tag, we run at recess, we play soccer and basketball and football – all while running. So why is run form NOT always natural? Well...fast forward to adulthood. I don't know about

you, but I'm tired. Regularly. Was I tired as a kid? I don't think so! Not during the day, and definitely not while I was running and playing with my siblings and my friends.



So what I'd like to go over is how fatigue affects our run form, and what to do to combat it – in layman's terms.

When an athlete runs tired, that athlete (generally) runs heavy. The runner's footfalls get heavier, because his muscles are fatigued and therefore not carrying the weight as well. (By the way, this doesn't happen as much with swimming or biking – they are not weight-bearing sports!) And when footfalls get heavier, the joints take on more impact. Feet, ankles, knees, hips, back – all are impacted by the impact! 😊

So, how to 'fix' it? There are many individual needs that go into that answer, of course – depending on how long you've been running this way, and how much pain you are in, and how many overuse injuries you have sustained.



But two changes can make a huge difference, in form:

1. Get bouncy. Activate all those tiny muscles in your feet and ankles, and 'bounce' off the ground – like the muscular use when you are bouncing on a trampoline. A small push on each forward run stride will do wonders for the 'heaviness'. It's not easy, and you may have to slow down your run to really get the proper balance of push and pull, but it's worth it!
2. Engage the glutes and quads. As runners, we have some hamstrings – they work hard! And they're effective. But there's nothing that says we can't work the glutes and quads just as hard! A small lift from the quad and forward drive of the knee (after the 'bounce' from #1) will engage the glutes and give the hamstrings a much-needed break.



Getting tired is inevitable, especially after a swim and a bike, so learning how to run tired is essential to a successful triathlon and longevity as an endurance runner.

Happy Running!

We hope this run tip helps you – let us know next time we see each other!

**Contact Coach Dom or Coach Helen at 850-776-2685,
or via email at tripossibilities@gmail.com,
if you're interested in coaching on ANY level.**



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For more tips and videos, view our [YouTube Channel](#)



The Zarzaur Law Sea Turtle Youth Triathlon

Oct. 3.

Registration is Open.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



My Journey with Triathlon & Tri Gulf Coast Comes Full Circle



I joined Tri Gulf Coast in August 2015, after seeing many people over the past few years at Navy Federal Credit Union and at the NAS Pensacola Gyms wearing TGC shirts during workouts and various road races. Prior to joining, I also noticed that quite a few local runners were also triathletes. I distinctly remember racing with these athletes at the Pensacola Beach Triathlon as a First Timer, Grandman Triathlon, and a Portofino Super Sprint as a participant and volunteer.

As someone who enjoys history of any type, I read the Tri Gulf Coast website and learned how our club was formed. As you most likely know, Ann Knight is our founder and we owe her a great deal in terms of our current lifestyle and our triathlon community. After I read our history in 2015, I was hoping that I would be able to meet her in the future.

In 2019, I had that opportunity. After volunteering and cheering on our youth at the Maritime Deluna Duathlon, I gladly fulfilled my Sunday obligation to our Lord by attending Mass at St. Michael's Catholic Church. After Mass, I attended refreshments at the Family Center where I happened to sit at a table with a military family and two other parishioners. I introduced myself, shook hands with all of them, and we had an engaging conversation that steered toward my usual summer obligations on Pensacola Beach. I mentioned that I attend the different Catholic Mass's starting the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend, through the end of September and other times during the year because of those other commitments.

The parishioner sitting next to me noticed I was wearing my race shirt from the BFAST Triathlon in Jacksonville and that I had a USA Triathlon tag on my backpack, and asked me if I raced in triathlons. I informed her that I did. She then casually mentioned that she founded a local tri club, Tri Gulf Coast, and asked me if I was a member.

I was enjoying the company of Ms. Ann Knight. I talked about my membership and how much I enjoy the club. She mentioned that she wondered what I was doing throughout the summer which had me attending Mass at different Catholic Churches. We talked about Tri Gulf Coast, Mere Mortals, TGC Youth Events.

I described moments from the morning's Maritime Deluna Duathlon. I expounded on my enjoyment of the youth events, volunteering, and seeing our next generation of triathletes experiencing the sport. We talked about youth Maritime Duathlon, Sea Turtle Triathlon, and the Dip-N-Dash events at length. I was enjoying the discussion about how the club has grown and changed as much as she was excited to hear how much of an impact the club had on me and the community. We talked about the impact triathlon (& TGC) has in the community by supporting local businesses and the personal impact it has with people who ultimately start making healthier lifestyle choices.

It's inspiring to realize how the club's members have spread out to participate in events literally across the globe. Ann did not realize the full impact of forming the club in 1996. In addition, we connected some dots and realized direct influence on the 2016 U.S. Paratriathlon Paralympic Team. Their Coach, Mark Sortino, is a former member of Tri Gulf Coast and continues to leave an indelible mark in the triathlon community. One question to ask Mark might be if he would have become a triathlete if there was never a Tri Gulf Coast.

As we talked about the club and she was reminiscing I



noticed she became teary-eyed. I continued to thank her for what she did back in 1996, since her idea had a tremendous impact even today. After our conversation, I gave Ms. Knight my volunteer backpack from Maritime Deluna, and had a photo taken to commemorate our meeting and time together.



All of us can be very thankful to Ms. Ann Knight for what she and a small group of people started more than 20 years ago. I always enjoy our Sunday workouts, periodic socials, and weekly morning swim practice whenever I can attend. If it was not for the creation and continued growth of Tri Gulf Coast, many, if not most of us would most likely not be as active in Triathlon as we are today.

Semper Fi!!!



Jeddy "Bronco" Ruiz
Triathlete

Events



**Tri Gulf Coast
End-of-Year Party
October 21
Details Soon!**



[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



[Fenner Ride](#)
(18, 42, 62, or 100-mile options)
October 30



[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](#)

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