



Milkman Triathlon Preparation

As you prepare for the 33rd annual Milkman Triathlon, I want you to feel a sense of accomplishment for not only registering for this awesome event, but for training hard and steady. We all have life barriers that keep us from feeling secure about our preparedness for events like triathlons, but as a coach, I want to give you all the guidance and help I possibly can. As a Milkman “veteran”, I don’t want to impress you, but impress upon you what it takes to have a great “dairy” day!

As a disclaimer, these are suggestions and thoughts from my own point of view.

Pre-Race and Swim

- Race Day is always the first Saturday in June.
- Friday before race day is a great day to head to Dexter (between Artesia and Roswell) and check out the venue. If you can, get in the water and swim a few minutes, check out the transition and drive the course.
- The water depth has gone down over the last few years. 500 meters is the swim distance and it’s an out and back course.
- Depending on your wave, you might need to limit your sun exposure before your start. Find a shady spot to sit and chill before your wave.
- Make the decision of whether you will need a wetsuit or not now. Not in the water.
- You’ll be asked to walk the deck, then, enter the water to prepare for your start.
- Unless you are a seasoned swimmer, you should try to position yourself away from the rope (inside) as to let the faster athletes have at each other. Hint! You will lose far more time stopping, fixing your goggles, or freaking out than going slow and having to do the breast stroke to get around people. The swim is a fraction of the distance in any triathlon; use it as a warm up!

Transition 1 and Bike

- If you downloaded my triathlon checklist, you should have all you need in your transition area for your bike and run to follow. Don’t compare what others do or have in their space... they are all crazy!
- The bike is 20K or 12.4 miles. As you exit the lake area, you will make a tricky left turn that has literally swallowed many careless riders. This is rural New Mexico. Which means gravel will surely exist on a triathlon bike course. This turn is NO exception. Take it slow!
- The rest of the course to the turnaround is flat and steady with a nice uphill kick right before the half way point. If you drive the course, be aware of the cattle guards. They will still be there on race day (probably covered with plywood and artificial turf)
- Hint! If you have aero bars, get off them and prepare to hit the cattle guards as if you were a railroad crossing. Secure your water bottles and DO NOT try drinking or eating at this point.
- Speaking of... hydration is more important than solid food in this race. Make sure you have at least one large bottle on your bike. IT WILL BE HOT!!!
- What goes up must come down... FAST! Once you make the turnaround you will be flying back. Being cautious goes without mention here. Pass only on the left and be aware of oncoming cyclists.
- Turns should still be respected. As should the yellow lines in the middle of the road. Don’t cross them and you won’t have to ask “What does “DQ” mean”?

Transition 2 and Run

- Are wondering why I omitted speaking about the wind?... Umm, this is New Mexico. If there are is no wind, you must be in a race with athletes sporting wings with harps playing.
- Coming into T2 there will be runners. Stay on the right side of the road.
- Dismount and walk your bike to your spot with your helmet buckled. Only after you rack your bike can you take that brain bucket off.
- 2 out of 3 down and the heat will be ohhhh so nice! A light colored hat will make your last 5K or 3.1 miles much better.
- You will have a water stop very soon after you start running out of T2. Take whatever they have. It will be worth it.
- Since I was never immune to the hot conditions of this race, this leg seems to be a blur to me. But here is what I have heard...
- You will be running mostly on dirt roads around fish hatchery ponds. Pace yourself the first few minutes, then pick up the pace by checking your form. Shoulders back and keep your thumbs up and out. Every couple of minutes, take a deep breath in and exhale slowly.
- Bring a small water bottle to keep you company, or take whatever the race has on the course. Either way, hydrate!
- Once you meander with the fish a couple miles you will be coming out to a road that hugs the lake. You will start to hear the crowd or announcer now.
- Pick up your pace, but only after a quick body check. Shoulders back and thumbs out again.
- The finish line is on grass. So, if you want to cartwheel, dive, or slide in, you can. I always opted to elegantly puke...
- If you elbowed, kicked or bit any competitors along the course, this is where you display sportsmanship, shake hands and walk away.
- YOU ARE A MILKMAN!

For coaching or race consulting, contact Santiago Multisport at www.santiagomultisport.com or call 858-361-9577.

