You can have it all... and triathlon, too.

It is hard to win at life when you are training for long-course triathlon. That's because training for an Ironman® race is like a part-time job. Too many athletes make big sacrifices only to burn out or underperform.

Coach Matt Dixon opens the door to long-course racing for every athlete who has never had the time to take on a challenge this big. If you have 10 hours a week to train, you can do an Ironman. In as few as 7 hours a week, you can do an Ironman 70.3®. It may come as a surprise, but more is not better if it comes at the expense of the rest of life.

Fast-Track Triathlete offers you a custom training program and everything you need to know to make important decisions on volume and intensity on a weekly and daily basis. Dixon opens up his vault of workouts, sharing key sessions for both post-season and preseason training, and reveals a complete training plan for the 14 weeks leading up to your goal race. You get unprecedented access to the winning method of a world-class triathlon coach, including:

- 14-week comprehensive training plans for the buildup to Ironman and Ironman 70.3 races
- 10 weeks of key workouts for the postseason
- 14 weeks of key workouts for the preseason
- Instruction on scaling workouts for time and fatigue
- Travel protocols for training and racing
- A sport-specific strength and conditioning program

Dixon's program will bring your triathlon goals within reach and develop you as an athlete season after season. The Fast-Track approach to triathlon will help you achieve fulfillment and success in sport and in life.

**Matt Dixon** is a world-class triathlon coach, former professional triathlete and elite swimmer, and an exercise physiologist. His Purple Patch coaching community is based in San Francisco, but his athletes span the globe. Matt is the author of The Well-Built Triathlete, a regular contributor to sports magazines and publications, an Ironman U master coach, and a corporate speaker.

“Fewer hours, more focus, and better results.”
—SAMI INKINEN, CEO and founder of Virta Health, cofounder of Trulia, and age-group triathlon world champion
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Triathlon is a complex and uniquely challenging sport. It demands a high degree of overall fitness and proficiency in three distinct disciplines that require a lot of sophisticated gear, and it necessitates relentless drive, focus, and many hours of training. Not surprisingly, the sport draws ambitious individuals whose lives are already rich with commitments to their careers and families. Those people seem to have a genuine desire to pursue big goals in Ironman® and Ironman 70.3 races.

Although anyone can enter triathlon at a casual or recreational level, to truly achieve success and continually improve in the sport takes ongoing commitment. You need a focused mindset and pragmatic adaptability to train and race while also performing at a high level at your workplace, within your family and social circles, and in your community. That’s often much easier said than done, especially for people who are time starved before they even get started.

The reality is that in many cases, the pursuit of triathlon becomes all-consuming, especially when you are training for an Ironman triathlon. You’ve probably experienced this firsthand or witnessed it in friends or training partners, individuals who try so hard to achieve their goals in triathlon that the rest
of their lives suffer. They become fully invested in the sport; they sign up for a race, buy the gear, and start training only to find themselves overwhelmed and falling behind, both in training and other aspects of their lives. They invest still more time and energy in training, but it only leads to fatigue and anxiety. Suddenly they’re not performing as well at work, they’re not sleeping or eating well, and they become more susceptible to illness. There might even be added tension with a significant other or family members. Amid this mounting pressure, these athletes continue to push themselves beyond their limits regardless of the detrimental effects.

I found myself in a similar scenario in my athletic pursuits as an elite swimmer and professional triathlete. When I reflect on my career, it is clear that I had a very strong work ethic, and I made it my mission to try to outwork my competition. Although I made the finals of the Olympic Swimming Trials, and I won a couple of professional races over the course of my triathlon career, I underperformed relative to my potential and ultimately burned out. The cause of my underperformance came down to the simple truth that I didn’t have a comprehensive approach to training. Despite my educational background in exercise physiology as well as experience coaching collegiate-level swimming, I didn’t structure my workouts correctly, and I didn’t optimize my endurance training with the essential building blocks of success: strength, conditioning, nutrition, and recovery. I now refer to those four key areas as the pillars of performance because regardless of your experience, you must nurture and develop all of these areas to succeed as an athlete. They have become the baseline educational tools and program framework for all Purple Patch athletes.

I’m here to tell you there is a more realistic, sustainable, and life-affirming path to success. Best of all, it will actually help you overcome challenges in the rest of your life, too. It doesn’t require you to maximize the number of hours you spend training during any given week. Instead, it is rooted in optimization of available hours. The goal is to attain the highest amount of quality training you can fit into your week while also maintaining high performance in the other important areas of your life. Your best training recipe might lead you to
consistently log fewer hours of training most weeks, but the mission will be for those training hours to be very effective. It is all determined by what works for you.

Having coached multiple professional and age-group world champions and dozens of highly successful amateurs who live extremely busy lives, I’ve been able to develop a comprehensive framework and methodology that integrate triathlon training and racing into a full life. I wrote Fast-Track Triathlete for anyone looking to create and execute a sustainable plan for success. I will show you how to plan proactively, make pragmatic decisions and adjustments over the course of your training, and eliminate or scale workouts when necessary without compromising your key sessions. I’ve used the same framework and philosophy outlined in this book to help hundreds of athletes achieve their long-distance triathlon goals.

Like my previous book, The Well-Built Triathlete, I wrote this book with ambitious, performance-oriented, age-group athletes in mind. However, this book is not just about training for triathlons. Training for a full Ironman or Ironman 70.3 is a metaphor for something much bigger. Yes, this book will help you solve your Ironman challenges, but the intent is to help you do so by creating a sustainable framework for training and racing that also supports your bigger goals in work and life. Ultimately, I wrote this book to help you execute your Ironman goals and everything that goes with them.

Training doesn’t have to become a distraction from work, keep you from being present for your family or commitments, or require you to live like a monk for several months. If you are a really busy person, your pursuit of triathlon had better be fun and bring you happiness. Otherwise, what’s the point? It’s possible for you to train and race in a way that improves your health and feeds your soul, thus giving you something for yourself. You can become a better version of yourself, at which point you will find that you have a greater capacity to focus and think critically at work and be better in your relationships.

Is this a controversial approach? Absolutely. It debunks the prevailing belief that triathlon has to be a selfish, exclusive pursuit that stands between you and
your family and friends. Critics of my approach are obsessed, self-punishing types, and they probably aren’t training correctly in the first place. They’re single-mindedly chasing something unattainable and definitely unsustainable. This mindset can bring down so many triathletes, making their results meaningless in the greater context of life.

The approach we’ll explore in this book takes courage. If you choose this journey, you will need to avoid looking over the fence at the athletes accumulating big hours and mileage. You will need to remain focused on your needs (and those of your loved ones) and not fall into the trap of feeling as if you must do more. Fast-Track Triathlete doesn’t serve a performance-at-all-costs mindset, lining out everything you can possibly do to get faster.

It’s more than possible to gain performance with limited training time, and I believe focused training is the best avenue for success. My 14-week race-prep plan will show you how it works, but I hope you will see beyond the training plan and your goals for your upcoming race. Use the same principles in the rest of your life, which is your most important performance pursuit. Fast-Track Triathlete demonstrates how to successfully implement an adaptable, pragmatic approach to training in terms of both time management and the habits proven to support performance. By following the principles and operating within the framework outlined in this book, you will make a critical investment in yourself that adds value and performance to every aspect of your life.

CASE STUDY: EMBRACE THE JOURNEY

CEO Michael Concannon, founder of three San Francisco–based software businesses, set a goal of completing his first Ironman. Although this aspiration is quite common, Michael was not looking to finish an Ironman as a badge of honor. He is an intelligent, highly motivated individual on a personal quest of sorts, a pursuit to enhance his life.

Michael didn’t participate in organized sports when he was younger, but as an adult he occasionally ran and rode a bike. He taught himself to swim after his daughter was born, and six years later he found his way into Olympic-distance triathlons. As his enthusiasm
for triathlon training and greater fitness grew, he began looking for a way to balance his many commitments.

When I started working with Michael, we decided to cut his training time back to an average of 12 or 13 hours per week. He could have sacrificed more family or work time, but fewer training hours proved enough to perform well and excel in those areas, too. Michael learned how to scale key training workouts and eliminate some of the supporting sessions as needed. By establishing a sustainable training program rather than consistently dancing on the edge of overtraining, he was able to remain energized on a daily and weekly basis. Coupled with good nutrition and sleep habits, Michael's training kept him fresh throughout the workday and engaged at home with his wife and three young kids.

Michael proactively planned his training, blocking out the time as he would for meetings. This allowed him to be focused during his workouts, which paid off when he returned to the office invigorated. Ultimately, he learned to control what he could control (namely his training) and adapt to the unpredictable nature of entrepreneurial business and the day-to-day life of his busy family. Michael admits that a 5:30 a.m. swim workout is challenging, but he still makes it to the pool two mornings a week. He knows that training block is important to achieving his goals and helps to balance the rest of his day.

If he has a transcontinental trip to New York City for business, he adapts his training before, during, and after he travels. If he’s feeling fatigued and knows he needs to skip a certain session so he can finish a work project or attend an event with his family, that’s what he does. It no longer makes him anxious. It’s a win-win situation for his training, his health, and his daily responsibilities. Furthermore, his wife and children have taken to sport in their own ways, too. They’ve come to appreciate teamwork, endurance, and mental fortitude, and they understand why Michael's triathlon goals are important. His example benefits the entire family.
MATT DIXON is an exercise physiologist and an elite coach. He is founder and president of Purple Patch fitness, a fitness and coaching company serving triathletes and endurance enthusiasts of all levels, from world champions to novices. His clients include leading professional triathletes and endurance athletes, executives of global companies, serious amateur triathletes, and fitness aficionados looking to improve both their lives and their performances.

Over the past few years, Purple Patch athletes have laid claim to over 250 professional Ironman- and half-Ironman-distance championships and podium finishes, over 125 of which have been victories. The winning formula is rooted in the Purple Patch pillars of performance. When endurance, strength, nutrition, and recovery are adequately and equally developed, athletes enter into a “purple patch” in which top performances become a reality. Matt has developed numerous athletes from the amateur ranks to have highly successful professional careers. He has also helped more than 150 athletes qualify for and compete in
the Hawaii Ironman World Championship, including multiple age-group world champions. Matt’s coaching career is steeped in his own experience, first as an elite swimmer and then as a professional triathlete. He was a two-time Olympic trials finalist for Great Britain and an NCAA Division I swimmer. His triathlon career spanned multiple seasons; he competed as a pro at the Hawaii Ironman and won Vineman 70.3.

Starting out as a coach in a national champion swimming program, Matt went on to become an NCAA Division I collegiate swimming coach while completing his master’s degree in clinical and exercise physiology. He ultimately landed in triathlon and has been coaching triathletes since 2001. Matt is the author of *The Well-Built Triathlete*, a complete training manual that develops the whole athlete for greater performance. He has been featured in the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, *Outside* magazine, *Men’s Fitness, Men’s Health, Triathlete* magazine, *Triathlete Europe*, and *Lava Magazine*. Contact Matt through his website, PurplePatchfitness.com.

Matt lives in San Francisco with his wife, Kelli, their son, Baxter, and their naughty dog, Willow.
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