

SPECIAL BEGINNER'S GUIDE

GEAR >> TRAINING >> RACE SCENE >> LIFESTYLE

Triathlete

FEBRUARY 2009

» TRIATHLETES OF THE YEAR

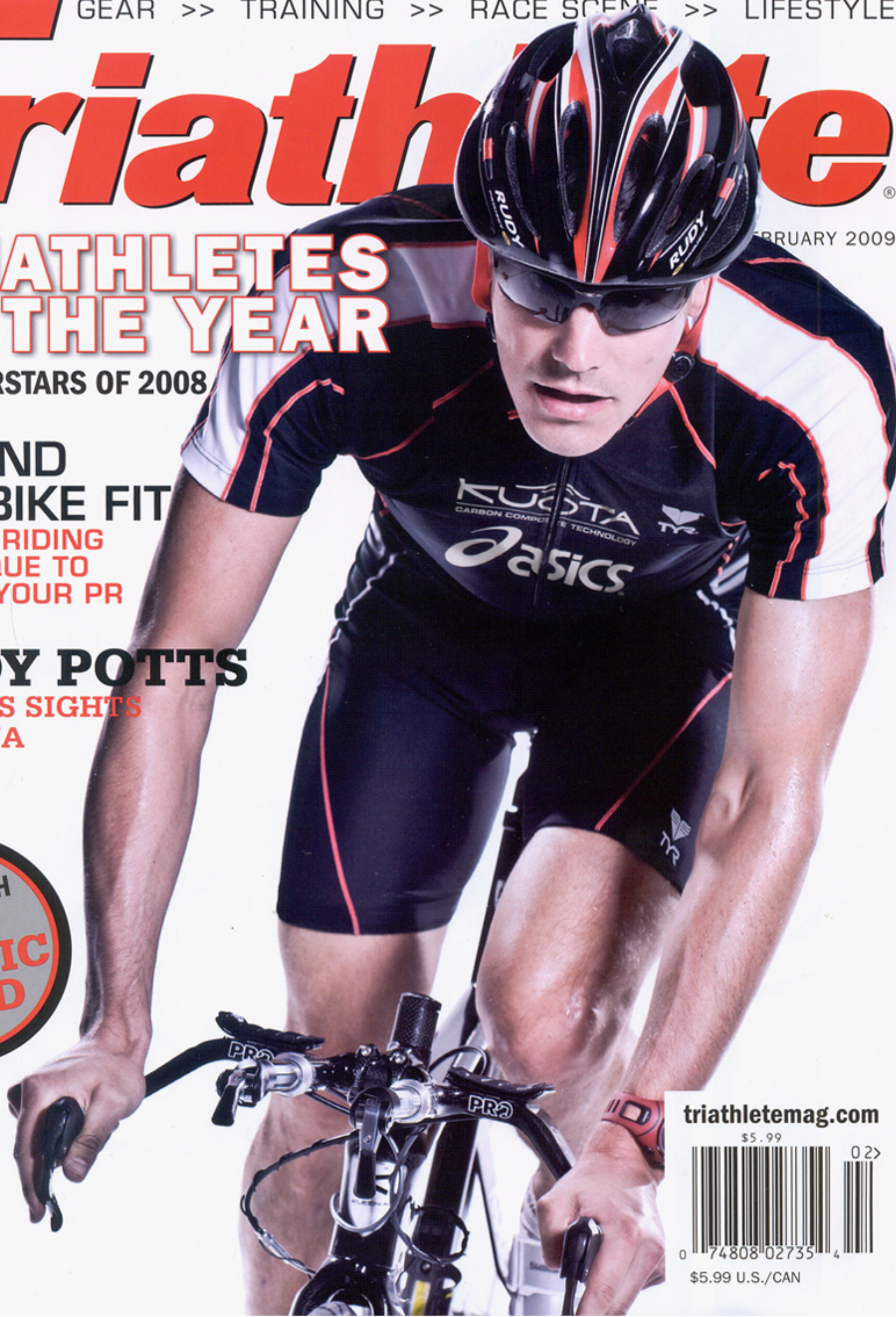
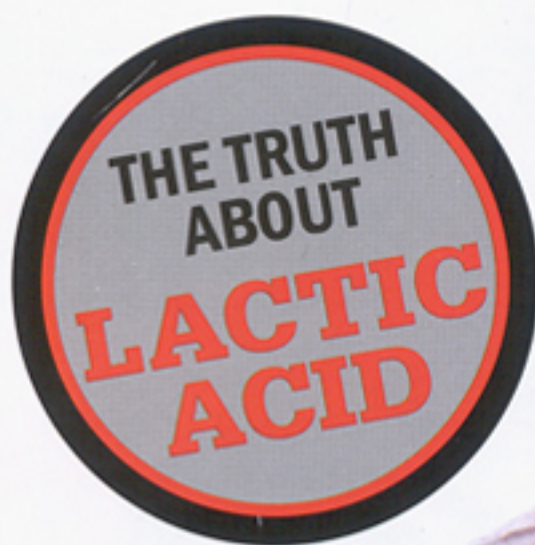
12 SUPERSTARS OF 2008

» BEYOND THE BIKE FIT

PROPER RIDING
TECHNIQUE TO
SMASH YOUR PR

» ANDY POTTS

SETS HIS SIGHTS
ON KONA



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the cold weather, lack of money for gear and parts, and I recently got my driver's license. Yet, in the end it's worth every ride.

Zac Bunker
Oxnard, Calif.

Tinley's Column on SIPE Brings Topic to Light

I would like to extend a warm thank you to *Triathlete* for its coverage of the mystery of triathlon deaths in the December issue of Tinley Talks column, "To Die Trying." It's truly an open-minded effort that keeps our sport healthy and on the cutting edge of science, research and technology. Sometimes in print media, it's easier to take the safe route and cover topics that are less controversial. Until now, SIPE (swimming-induced pulmonary edema) has been overlooked as a cause of death in racing, and many don't know the signs to look for when an athlete exits the swim in trouble.

In July 2007, I was pulled from Ironman Lake Placid and taken away by ambulance after the swim portion of the race. I was coughing up blood and couldn't get oxygen. This was my second DNF in the 2007 race season—both were confirmed cases of SIPE.

I have been on a quest to find the answers to this puzzling condition and to share that knowledge with as many triathletes and race directors as possible. I posted my experiences on the Slowtwitch Web site and was fortunate enough to connect with a research scientist out of Houston, Dr. Charles C. Miller III, who was instrumental in helping me piece together the puzzle of this condition.

With Dr. Miller's help and the careful guidance of my cardiologist, I continued to train and race in 2007 in order to identify my triggers and prevent another occurrence of SIPE. In my case, it seems to be a combination of mild-hypertension, over-hydration and a rapid start that was the cause of my perfect storm. I'm happy to report that with some careful attention to my pre-race regimen, I have raced SIPE free for the entire 2008 triathlon season at Ironman Florida, Ironman Germany, Muskoka 70.3, Timberman 70.3 and the Mooseman.

Dr. Miller has put together a large-scale survey to help define the risk factors of SIPE more clearly. The hope is that once he has the prevalence data in hand, it will give him the necessary information in which to form a case-finding on the subject. The survey has already been sent out in an e-news blast to all USAT members and we've had quite a few respondents, some of which have experienced the tell-tale signs of SIPE. Those include coughing up pink frothy foam and blood.

I am trying to create a useful resource for anyone wanting more information on this condition, these articles are on my Web site, www.endurancetriathletes.com/sipe, along with a New York Times article, "Recent Triathlon Deaths" from July 28, 2008.

Katherine Calder-Becker
Quebec, Canada

Newby-Fraser's Bike Training Helped My PR

I was hit by a car and broke my leg in three places on May 4 of this year. With lots of hard work I was able to complete IM Florida five months later in a very respectable time. Since my bike was totaled in the wreck and I need to ride custom at 6'6", I only had eight weeks to prepare on the bike. I used the Paula Newby-Fraser's "Honest Ironman Bike Training" from your magazine to average 19.8 mph, which was less than 1 mph off my Ironman bike PR. Despite having to do a run/walk combo on marathon, I finished in 12:37:14.

Rick Christensen
Charleston, S.C.



Walks to the Finish Not Shameful

In your Letter from the Editor, "Off to Kona to Check Out Some Ladies (November 2008)," you used an unfortunate phrase, "several shameful walks to the finish," which I take great exception to. Some of us do not have the luxury of good knees and, while physically unable to run, we can speed walk a marathon (it's a six-hour ordeal, and if you think that is easy, try walking for six hours, especially after swimming 2.4 miles and biking 112 miles). I have finished two Ironman triathlons (Wisconsin and Canada) and have un-shamefully walked across the finish lines. My knee is so bad my orthopedist wonders how I walk, let alone swim and bike. (I refuse to get [my knee] replaced because it would end my triathlon career.) So, while I may never qualify for Kona, or much of anything else, this 56-year-old man proudly walks across the finish lines to the adoring cheers of my wife and all six of my children.

Jeffrey K. Heinichen
Cincinnati, Ohio

Editor's Note: I did not mean to imply that walking across the finish line at an Ironman is shameful. There's nothing shameful about finishing an Ironman or even making the attempt, no matter what speed you go. I felt shamed in my particular case because I had bragged about my fitness level to my coworkers before the event, only to be humbled to a walk on race day. —Brad Culp

Sold a Car for My First Tri Bike

Have you ever wanted something so badly that you would trade something of importance for it? I have recently experienced this feeling, and acting on impulse, I traded my sister's old battered 1989 Honda Civic for a Specialized Allez 2004. The reason for the trade: triathlons. I have started training for my first triathlon and I needed a bike. The problem with this trade is