

# Slowtwitch Triathlon Cycling Coaching Certification

The Slowtwitch Triathlon Cycling Coaching Certification Clinic focuses completely on cycling coaching primarily as it relates to the sport of triathlon. It is a 13 hour course delivered over 2 days with over half of the sessions in the field (grassy field, parking lot, etc.) as a hands-on coaching practicum. Attendees are taken through the progression of assessing and improving different levels of athletes in addition to learning how to test athletes and monitor progress, teach crucial elements of bike handling skills and race strategy, develop fitness, and make smart equipment selections.

All clinic attendees are given the opportunity to get as involved as they would like during the practicums. Some attendees are needed to play the role of the athlete in various simulations and demonstrations on the bike, but this is completely voluntary and not required. Volunteers are rotated so that everyone gets a chance to observe and coach.

## Topics Covered

There are 5 interactive classroom presentations/discussions and 5 hands-on practicums at the cycling coaching clinic. The sessions vary in length from 45 minutes to 2.25 hours depending on the topic. Each session is listed below with a brief summary. Please note that the content of each presentation and practicum is subject to change and can vary based on the needs of the attendees.

### **Coaching Beginner and Intermediate Triathlon Cyclists (75 minute presentation)**

Beginners and intermediates are the most common athletes a coach typically encounters. During this presentation, attendees are guided through the stages of working with an athlete from initial athlete assessments to a desired skills progression. The skills progression component focuses on the proficiency each level of athlete should achieve before moving onto the next element and how skill development should be incorporated into training sessions. The focus for beginners is on creating comfort on the bike and learning basic bike handling skills, including grabbing a water bottle while remaining stable and learning to fall properly. For intermediate athletes, the focus is on developing a more efficient pedal stroke while continuing to gain confidence on the bike with skills such as looking back, elbow bumping and shoulder bumping. Common issues and corresponding drills are reviewed as well.

### **Coaching Beginner and Intermediate Triathlon Cyclists (2.25 hour practicum)**

Attendees are taken to a field or parking lot where the previous presentation's information is enforced through hands-on training. Volunteer beginner and intermediate athletes are taken through the initial assessments before moving onto to skill development. Attendees follow along during the demonstration and then have the opportunity to help coach and work through the different skill development drills with the volunteer athletes. Common issues and corresponding drills are reviewed as well.

### **Coaching Advanced Triathlon Cyclists (60 minute presentation)**

Advanced athletes can be difficult to coach because it takes more intense training to see a modification materialize. During this presentation, attendees are guided through the stages of working with an advanced athlete from initial athlete assessments to a desired skills progression. The skills progression component focuses on advanced bike handling skills and fitness development and how that can be incorporated into training sessions. The primary areas of skill development include areas such as riding one-handed, cornering, and riding in a pack while the goal of training is to improve aerodynamics and increase efficiency on the bike.

**Coaching Advanced Triathlon Cyclists (90 minute practicum)**

Attendees are taken to a field where the previous presentation's information is enforced through hands-on training. Volunteer advanced athletes are taken through the initial skill assessment before moving into to drill reinforcement work and advanced skill development. Attendees follow along during the demonstration and have the opportunity to help coach and work through the different skill development drills with the volunteer athletes.

**Equipment Selection and Bike Fit Basics (90 minute presentation/practicum)**

It can be overwhelming for an athlete to decide what equipment to purchase and how to know if a bike is fit properly. Coaches need to be adept at helping athletes select the best equipment for their needs while staying within budget. This presentation covers different options for athletes and their pros and cons. The basics of what to look for when an athlete is on a bike to see if it is fit properly and how to make the necessary adjustments is also addressed with a sample athlete on a bike.

**Course Scouting (60 minute presentation)**

Athletes need to be prepared for race day, and that includes getting to know the race course itself. It is important for coaches to know how to effectively scout a race course to give their athletes the best preparation and knowledge possible. Various techniques for performing course reconnaissance and deconstructing the terrain and how to use the information to create a pacing plan are presented.

**Benchmark Testing (60 minute practicum)**

Athletes can only show improvement if there is a starting point from which to measure their progress. Benchmark tests provide coaches with quantitative feedback on how the athlete is responding to training. Attendees are taken through the process of assessing an athlete, determining an appropriate benchmark test for varying skill levels, and using that test to measure progress throughout training. Sample benchmark tests are provided as well as guidelines for developing ones specific to an individual athlete's needs.

**Cycling Coach Training (90 minute practicum)**

Attendees are given the opportunity to apply what they have learned over the last two days with real athletes in a coaching simulation. Attendees take turns playing the role of the athlete while the others coach the attendees in the field. The clinic instructor guides the coaches and provides feedback and suggestions. Attendees are rotated between the coach and athlete roles so that they have the opportunity to learn both as a coach and from the perspective of an athlete.

**Open Discussion/Q&A (45 minute discussion)**

The final session of the clinic is completely guided by the attendees. During this time, attendees have the opportunity to ask questions about anything related to cycling, cycling coaching and triathlon. It is an opportunity to expand on topics covered throughout the course as well as answer any outstanding questions. Attendees are encouraged to ask questions and engage in discussion to learn from one another as well as the instructor.

# **Triathlon Cycling Coaching Certification Clinic Sample Schedule**

## **Day 1**

07:45 - 08:00 AM	<b>Clinic Check-In</b>
08:00 - 08:25 AM	<b>Introduction</b>
08:30 - 09:45 AM	<b>Coaching Beginner and Intermediate Triathlon Cyclists (lecture)</b>
10:00 - 12:15 PM	<b>Coaching Beginner and Intermediate Triathlon Cyclists (practical)</b>
12:15 - 01:15 PM	<b>Lunch</b>
01:15 - 02:15 PM	<b>Coaching Advanced Triathlon Cyclists (lecture)</b>
02:30 - 04:00 PM	<b>Coaching Advanced Triathlon Cyclists (practical)</b>

## **Day 2**

08:00 - 09:30 AM	<b>Equipment Selection/Bike Fit Basics (lecture/practical)</b>
09:45 - 10:45 AM	<b>Course Scouting (lecture)</b>
11:00 - 12:00 PM	<b>Benchmark Testing (practical)</b>
12:00 - 01:00 PM	<b>Lunch</b>
01:00 - 02:30 PM	<b>Cycling Coach Training (practical)</b>
02:45 - 03:30 PM	<b>Open Discussion/Q&amp;A (lecture)</b>
03:30 - 04:00 PM	<b>Certification Process</b>