DIFFERENTBREED
ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE TRAINING

STRENGTH, SKILL AND STAMINA FOR IRONMAN EXCELLENCE

DISCLAIMER

The information provided in this document is for educational and informational purposes only.

The author, coach, and publisher make no guarantees or warranties regarding the accuracy, applicability, or effectiveness of the strategies, techniques, and advice shared. The content is based on personal experience and should not be considered professional medical or clinical advice.

By reading this document, you acknowledge that you are solely responsible for your own actions, decisions, and outcomes. The author assumes no liability for any consequences resulting from the use or misuse of the information provided.

HEALTH & FITNESS DISCLAIMER

This document discusses topics related to physical fitness, athletic performance, and

endurance training.

All advice is drawn from the author's personal coaching experience and is intended for general guidance only. It should not replace consultation with a licensed medical professional or qualified coach, especially if you have pre-existing health conditions, injuries, or mental health concerns.

Always seek professional medical advice before beginning any new training program.

The author is not responsible for any injuries, illnesses, or adverse effects resulting from the application of the information in this document.

NO GUARANTEES OF RESULTS

Performance, endurance, and personal development are highly individualized.

While the strategies shared here have worked for the author and some athletes, results will

vary depending on your unique circumstances, training history, health status, and personal commitment.

No outcome is guaranteed. Your progress is your responsibility.

COPYRIGHT & INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

© Liza Smith (Different Breed) 2025.
All rights reserved.

This document, including all text, graphics, and images, is protected under copyright law.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means - including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods - without the prior written permission of the author.

Exceptions include brief quotations used for review or commentary, provided proper credit is given to the author.

EXTERNAL LINKS & THIRD-PARTY RESOURCES

This document may contain links to third-party websites or resources for further reading. The author does not endorse, control, or take responsibility for the content, accuracy, or availability of these external sites.

Clicking on external links is done at your own risk.

COMMUNITY & GROUP DISCLAIMER

If you choose to participate in any challenges, discussions, or community spaces related to Different Breed, you acknowledge that you are responsible for your own choices, actions, and consequences.

The author reserves the right to moderate or remove any inappropriate or harmful content in community discussions.

Any shared experiences, testimonials, or case studies are individual results and do not guarantee similar outcomes for others.

AGREEMENT TO TERMS

By reading, downloading, or engaging with this document, you acknowledge that you have read and agree to these terms.
The author is not liable for any outcomes resulting from the application of this content.

If you do not agree with these terms, please discontinue use of this document.

"You can keep going and your legs might hurt for a week, or you can quit and your mind will hurt for a lifetime."
- Mark Allen
6x Ironman World Champion

THE STRENGTH BLUEPRINT FOR CRUSHING YOUR IRONMAN

Achieving excellence in an Ironman triathlon requires tremendous strength, skill and stamina.

To become an elite Ironman athlete your training program must build extraordinary fitness across all three disciplines: swimming, cycling and running.

But the key to racing your best is developing a robust strength foundation.

The strength training outlined in this guide will help you construct the muscular base necessary for Ironman excellence.

With a focus on full-body movements like squats, deadlifts and core planks, you will gain the endurance to maintain proper form through the later miles when fatigue sets in.

Accessory exercises improve stability through single leg and upper body variations.

Sprint intervals boost stamina and fatigue resistance.

Commit to an S&C program encompassing all these elements and the payoffs will be huge on race day.

You'll develop the strength, skill and stamina needed to avoid hitting the wall and your body will withstand the pounding of the long distances.

Best of all you will cross the finish line knowing you properly prepared your body to achieve excellence in one of the toughest endurance challenges in sport.

Let's get started!

"You can quit if you want, and no one will care. But you will know the rest of your life." **-John Collins, Ironman Founder**

THE FOUNDATION

Squats

Squats are a great compound exercise that build strength in the legs, glutes, and core.

For Ironman athletes, strong legs and glutes are essential for the cycling and running portions. The quadriceps and hamstrings get worked hard during the squat motion.

This translates directly into more power and endurance on the bike and run courses.

Deadlifts

Deadlifts target the posterior chain including the hamstrings, glutes and lower back.

These muscle groups are critical for stabilizing the body in the aero cycling position and for propulsion during the run.

Deadlifts build tremendous back and hip

strength to help you withstand the demands of long hours on the bike and marathon distance on foot.

Core Planks

A strong core is vital for Ironman athletes for stability and efficiency in all three disciplines.

Planks build tremendous core endurance to maintain good form after hours of swimming, biking and running.

The abs, obliques, lower back and hips get strengthened to avoid fatigue and injury over the long Ironman event.

Push Ups

Upper body strength is often neglected but important for Ironman racing.

The swim requires substantial shoulder and chest strength.

Push ups build this strength which is needed

for efficient swimming stroke after stroke. The bike portion also requires some upper body strength to remain in the aerodynamic position for hours.

Pull Ups

Back and arm strength is also key for Ironman athletes.

Pull ups target the lats, biceps and other back muscles used for swimming and biking.

Grip strength helps hanging onto the bike and is built with pull ups.

Overall upper body endurance prevents muscle fatigue so athletes can perform at their best late into

"The Secret to Success is using a lot of little things consistently over a long period of time" **- James Lawrence aka "The Iron Cowboy"**

ACCESSORY WORK

Lower Body

Single leg exercises improve balance, engage stabiliser muscles, increase your range of motion compared to two leg versions and help prevent overuse injuries.

Alternating legs also allows athletes to identify and improve any muscular imbalances.

Stronger stabilisers and less imbalances mean better performance and injury prevention all round for Ironman athletes.

Single Leg Deadlifts

Single leg deadlifts emphasize stability in addition to strengthening the posterior chain.

Lifting one leg trains supporting leg muscles to stabilize the pelvis and spine when body weight shifts to one side.

This builds important balance for running off

the bike after hours in the aero cycling position.

Single Leg Squats

Like single leg deadlifts, single leg squats force the standing leg to stabilize against lateral movement.

This strengthens smaller stabilizer muscles along with the quads and glutes.

The added balance component helps Ironman athletes maintain good running form even when fatigued.

Single Leg Hip Thrusts

Hip Thrusts build glute and hamstring strength, both important muscle groups for cycling and running power.

Using one leg increases the range of motion for greater strength development.
The glutes play a key role in stabilising the

pelvis so single leg hip thrusts translate directly to better form and injury prevention.

Upper Body

These 3 exercises added to the 5 Foundation movements provide a robust, full body strength training program to meet the demands of Ironman racing.

They work the key muscles for swimming and biking and build stability as well as improving your posture for running.

Single Arm Rows

Rows work the back and biceps, key muscles for swimming and biking.

Using one arm at a time allows greater range of motion and disables the other side from compensating.

This builds core stability and strengthens smaller stabilizer muscles.

Overhead Carries

Carrying weight overhead challenges the shoulders, upper back, core and your grip strength.

This builds full body stability and endurance for maintaining good positioning during every discipline.

Overhead carries especially help create the posture and shoulder stability needed for efficient swimming.

Farmer's Walks

Farmer's walks involve carrying heavy weights in both hands at your sides.

This taxes the grip, forearms and upper back while forcing core engagement to resist rotation.

Farmer's walks strengthen the mid and upper back critical for the cycling position.

They also build grip endurance for hanging onto the bike and improved running form

Core

These core exercises train the abs, obliques, lower back and hips through their full range of motion.

Developing endurance in these muscles leads to better form, injury prevention and stronger overall core stabilization.

This allows Ironman athletes to maintain power and efficiency even after many miles on the course when fatigue sets in.

A strong core is a must for excelling over the Ironman distance

Plank Variations

Basic planks are excellent, but adding variations like side planks, rotating planks and planks on a stability ball challenge the core in different ways.

This builds endurance across all areas of the core, from shoulders to hips including the abs, obliques, lower back and hip stabilisers.

Palloff Press

The Palloff press specifically targets the obliques.

A cable or band is anchored to one side and the other end held at the mid-line.

Pressing out against resistance stresses the obliques whilst also forcing core engagement to resist rotation, building strength and stability.

Strong obliques are important for rotation in swimming and stabilization during cyclin

Dead Bugs

Lying on your back with arms and legs in the air, slowly extend one arm overhead while the opposite leg lowers towards the floor.
This challenges the core to stabilize against

movement of the extremities.

Dead bugs improve coordination of the hips and shoulders critical in all three disciplines.

The Secret Bonus - SIT (Sprint Interval Training)

Adding 5-10 minutes of sprint interval training at the end of a strength workout provides several benefits for improving endurance and resisting fatigue:

Boosts Cardiovascular Fitness -
The intense sprint intervals spike heart rate, increasing overall cardiovascular fitness which boosts endurance.

Builds Lactic Acid Tolerance -
Sprinting till exhaustion creates lactic acid buildup. Repeated sprints teach the body to buffer lactic acid more efficiently.

Enhances Recovery -
The body adapts to clear lactic acid

faster while recovering between sprints. This translates directly to resisting fatigue on race day.

Improves Form -
Sprinting when tired requires maintaining good form and muscle recruitment when fatigued. This skill is essential for Ironman athletes to hold pace late in the race.

Activates Fast twitch Muscle Fibres -
Strength training uses slow-twitch fibres. Sprinting engages fast-twitch fibres critical for power and speed.

This builds endurance and the ability to maintain pace and power even in the latter stages of an ironman when athletes are battling extreme fatigue. It's an efficient way to build critical physiological capacities.

CONCLUSION

Completing an Ironman triathlon requires incredible physical strength and mental toughness.

Preparing your body to excel across your chosen course is a monumental feat.

This strength training blueprint provides the foundation necessary to achieve excellence over the ironman distance.

By focusing on full body compound movements, targeted single limb exercises, core stabilization, and high intensity intervals, you've developed a robust base of power, endurance and fatigue resistance.

Executing this progressive strength program transforms the abilities of your muscles, connective tissues and cardiovascular system.

You now have the tools to avoid common pitfalls like fatigue-induced poor form, muscular imbalances, inefficient movement patterns,

and loss of speed late in the race.

Your preparation will pay dividends on race day when your body can maintain proper technique and economy of movement mile after gruelling mile.

The journey to become an Ironman requires tremendous dedication and work... But the pride of crossing that finish line knowing you properly prepared your physique to master this extraordinary challenge makes it all worthwhile.

You've strengthened your body to become an Ironman.

Now it's time to test your mettle and show what you can achieve.

"Some sessions are stars and some sessions are stones, but in the end they are all rocks and we build upon them."
- Chrissie Wellington
4x IM World Champion

ABOUT LIZA SMITH

PERFORMANCE COACH & DIFFERENT BREED FOUNDER

"The Endurance Expert – Unlock Your Peak Athletic Potential!"

Dedicated to endurance, particularly in extreme events like Ironman, OCR and Ultras, Liza stands out not just as a coach but as an emblem of determination and tenacity.

With a reputation for moulding winners and transforming raw potential into prowess, Liza is the top pick for those aspiring to reign supreme in their sport.

Liza's coaching philosophy centres on the power of the mind. Her five pillars – Control the Controllable, Find the Positive, Focus on You, 100% Effort, and Extreme Ownership – guide athletes to both mental and physical excellence.

Whether you're just starting out or vying for the gold, Liza ensures your hard work delivers results.

"Train with Liza and unleash the ultimate athlete within you."

Email me:
liza@differentbreed.io

Sign up to my newsletter:
differentbreed.io/performance

Check out my website:
differentbreed.io