



Triathlon book combines sound advice with humor

If you enjoy pushing yourself up the ladder of personal sports endurance challenges, Katherine Vaz, senior editor for Triathlon magazine, has the perfect book for you.

"Cross-Training: The Complete Book of the Triathlon,"

(Avon paperback original \$9.95, 1984) is a 239-page manual on the fastest-growing sport since the hula hoop.

If you've had wild dreams of some day reaching such levels

of fitness that you could actually swim one mile, bike 16, and run six without stopping, you'll welcome Vaz's practical and precision advice.

Along the path to physical fitness and through chapters on strategies, nutrition, game plans and training schedules, Vaz excites the would-be triathlete.

There is humor in this book too — and encouragement. If the best race of your life is a 10-minute per-mile jog, there's hope. If the thought of swim-

ing 100 yards in Leighton pool makes you reach for a Twinkie, Vaz offers step-by-step pointers on inner-pacing and upper-body workouts, illustrated by

clear photographs to help get you on the right path to fitness.

You can get pointers on how to "lighten up" when it comes to competing also. Vaz speaks of a supportive, "we're all in this together," atmosphere. "Personal bests" become of greater importance than defeating an "opponent."

Vaz successfully brings out this triathlon camaraderie by

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detailing "the cutting edge of triathloning." She invites the neophyte swimmer-biker-runner to cross-train. She claims (substantiated by examples of success stories in the

sport) that with proper technique, coaching, physical and mental rehearsal, and desire, you can be on the starting line of a short-distance triathlon within about one year. "And that's given the same amount of time you're now spending training in one sport," she says.

Vaz's book is also offers guides to learning more about sports medicine, the history of triathloning and equipment available including anything from running shoes to swim goggles to the best of Italian toe clips.

A friendly word of warning. Vaz lists eleven rules in Chapter 3 that should be paid attention too. She insists that you follow your personal physician's ad-

vice, cautions you about "overload" work interval options which engage you in anaerobic activity like sprints. Time, not distance, is crucial for the novice because "doing too much, too soon, is an unfortunate rule for beginning triathletes," says Vaz.

She offers advice on getting a sense of your own sports abilities suggesting that you push yourself, but just don't "kill" yourself in the process.

As Katherine Vaz says, "Train for one month and you'll feel the remarkable benefits. Train for one year, and you'll be ready for your first triathlon."

By Marilyn Osgood-Knight

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