



Linsey Corbin jumps for joy - not only has she just won Coeur d'Alene Ironman in a new course record, she now sees ppf teammate Meredith Kessler finishing second

purplepatch noun: A period of excellent performance, when nearly everything seems to go right, work properly, and is in perfect balance. Everything seems to fall into place and flows, making it seem like you cannot do anything wrong.

Performance Pillars - The philosophy for your best performance in fitness and sport

Let's begin with the basic pursuit many of us strive for in our fitness and sport - our best performance. There is obviously a wide range of experience and talent but, in the most pure form, everyone wants to improve. If you wish to improve and achieve optimal performance then you likely need to reach a higher level of performance potential, including fitness gains, power or pace improvements, body composition improvements and so on. These can be collectively called *adaptations*. Pretty obvious really; we train in order to make adaptations. Still, this concept is often forgotten when athletes and coaches create training plans or, to put it another way, many training plans display a lack of understanding on what it takes to make physiological adaptations. This results in a lot of hard work, but not the best return on training investment and, hence fewer adaptations and poorer subsequent performance.

It begins with health.

Any training plan should begin with the fundamental understanding that in order to make adaptations the athletes has to be healthy. You cannot make adaptations relevant to sporting performance while unhealthy, but I do not mean just an 'absence of disease', rather a strong hormonal profile, immune system and absence of disease, which all adds up to a term I coined *metabolic health*. If your body is in homeostasis, or balance, and functioning well then you are in a position to maximize gains from the hard training you do. Unfortunately *metabolic health* is most affected by stress, which can be defined as a physical or emotional strain on the body (we will leave it at that for the sake of simplicity in this article).

This is important; stress is a physical or emotional strain on the body. If you consider what stresses you have in your life - feel free to scribble them down if you wish - you will likely come up with broad categories of family and relationships, work, travel, environment, self stress (our view of ourselves), financial and others. All of these are great examples of stressors that negatively affect metabolic health, but what about exercise/training? While it may be a stress-relief emotionally it is still a massive form for physiological stress. How about nutrition? It can certainly be classified as a eustress, or positive influence on metabolic health, but only if you have suitable habits around the quantity, quality and all-important timing of nutrition (and fueling!). Recovery and sleep? Again, a great supporter of metabolic health, but only if you get enough of it and it is of good quality.

The point is that any training plan can only be effective if it is balanced within the framework of your life and also is supported with integrated and quality recovery, as well as proper nutrition and fueling.

Ask the right question.

If I am asked for advice on training many begin with questions revolving around how many hours of training is necessary in order to accomplish a specific goal. I find this an impossible question to answer, but it is also a flag that this athlete is going to require some education on training adaptations and balance. If forced to answer, I would have to say that you should train to a level that (a) is in balance with your physical experience and capacity to train, (b) fits in with the rest of your

life, and (c) avoids accumulation of too much stress (physical and emotional). A few of the athletes I coach are full-time professional triathletes who have limited stressors outside triathlon. Their capacity to train is great, hence they might accumulate 20-25 hours per week, but this training is still not completed with disregard for proper recovery, nutrition and consideration of 'life-factors'. Some of my professionals choose to continue to work full-time, including two who work well over 40 hours per week. For them, the appropriate dose of training usually is limited to 14 - 16 hours each week. These are not second tier professionals, but Ironman Champions and top podium finishers. Perhaps the most extreme example is an elite amateur I help, who is founder and CEO of a leading technology company and very limited on time. He is, of course, genetically gifted, but manages to be an 8 hour 50 min Ironman on 10-12 hours per week. The key to take away from these examples, from the 10 hour per week executive to 25 hour a week professional, is that *all of them* could train more, but it would be in trade for proper recovery. While *more is better* is the traditional mantra of many coaches and athletes, it is not the most logical approach to produce adaptations.

We have a saying in the *purplepatch* family - it takes courage to recover. Training often, and hard, is a prerequisite to gaining adaptations and finding performance, but doing so without proper consideration and implementation of recovery will always limit your potential gains.

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THE PURPLEPATCH NEWSLETTER

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purplepatch professionals - Just keep rolling....

Many of the purplepatch professionals are having career-best years. In the last month we have had some amazing achievements and results. It is hard to pick the best story, so here are a few highlights:

Linsey Corbin - Ironman Champion. Linsey began with purplepatch in October 2009, immediately stating she always dreamed of being an Ironman Champion. I promised she could achieve that goal in 2010, and last month she won Ironman Coeur d'Alene in a record-breaking time. With that wonderful start she begins her preparation for the Hawaii Ironman World Championship in October.

Meredith Kessler - Rookie of the Year. What an amazing first year as a professional for MBK. 4th at New Orleans 70.3, 2nd at Ironman St George, and now she helped make Coeur d'Alene a truly special day by finishing just one spot behind Linsey for a 2nd place. Meredith is now getting ready for Ironman number three, with Canada on tap for June.

Chris Lieto - Career Year. After finishing 2nd at the 2009 Ironman Hawaii World Championships it would have been easy to sit back and enjoy the accomplishment, but I believed Chris could be a better athlete in 2010. He believed it too. At the midway point of 2010 Chris has now won three Ironman 70.3 distance races, with the latest being Buffalo Springs in June and Vineman last weekend. He now begins his preparations for Hawaii with a training block planned in Mammoth with Ryan Hall and the elite US runners. A wonderful start to 2010 for Chris.

James Cotter - The Breakthrough. I have been telling everyone I could that James was due some great finishes. They finally came. Three top 5 finishes in the last three races with 3rd at Eagleman 70.3, 5th at Buffalo Springs 70.3 and a strong 3rd at Vineman 70.3 last weekend. James has arrived, and is now a threat in every race.

Tyler Stewart - The comeback. I wrote about Tyler's adventure in the bike racing world. She advanced from Cat 4 to Cat 1 in just a couple of months, but illness forced her to skip the National Time Trial Championships. (her big goal). With little to no running the past 6 months, Tyler returned to triathlon at last weekend's Vineman 70.3, recording an impressive 3rd place, which included a 1:25 half-marathon split. Not too bad! She will keep her focus on Ironman with Lake Stevens 70.3 in August and Ironman Hawaii in October.

Luke Bell - The beginning. Luke is the newest professional on the purplepatch roster. The first goal was Ironman Coeur d'Alene, with the aim to qualify for the Hawaii Ironman World Championships. With a strong 4th place finish, Luke is set to begin his preparations for Hawaii and continue his evolution to one of the World's best. His journey has begun.

We are now up to 22 podium finishes in major events this year, a nice start to the year. We also get to welcome **Rachel Joyce** back to racing at Antwerp 70.3 this weekend, and will see a renewed **Matt Lieto** at Ironman Canada following a bout of Epstein-Barr. He will be joined by **Rob Johnson** in Canada, while **Andrew Yoder** sets up for his short-course race season with Chicago and LA on the horizon. It should be a fun second half of the season.

purplepatch Adventure - Spain 2010

This year purplepatch took to Catalonia with a wonderful week of riding in and around Girona, Spain. Teaming up with Studio Velo (www.studiovelomv.com) 12 enthusiasts enjoyed some of the most spectacular riding Europe has to offer, only eclipsed by the world-class dining and wine that awaited us each evening. It was a spectacular week, with the faster riders managing to accumulate over 350 miles and 30,000 feet of climbing. Of course, not everyone was forced to go that far! A full report and a collection of photos from the week can be found at http://www.purplepatchfitness.com/purplepatch_fitness/Knowledge+Knowledge+.html. Next year is Italy. Let us know if you would like to be kept in the loop on details email matt@dixon@purplepatchfitness.com



Meredith Kessler running to 2nd place at Ironman Coeur d'Alene. Linsey was jumping at joy at seeing her friend follow her onto the podium

purplepatch - in brief

Corbin on the cover - Keep an eye out for this month's *Triathlete Magazine* with purplepatch pro Linsey Corbin on the cover. The story follows her path as a purplepatch pro to winning last month's Ironman Coeur d'Alene.

LAVA Magainze - The new magazine from WTC (Ironman) is out this month. Matt Dixon is contributing the feature training article this month. Check it out: www.lavamagazine.com

Autumn Adventure - Keep an eye out in the coming week or so for news on a September riding adventure in the Northern California Area. We are designing a 1 - 3 day escape during the best time to ride in NorCal. We have penciled in **September 17th to 19th**, so check the website in the coming week.

2011 Adventure: Italy - After the success of our 2010 riding adventure in Girona, we're moving to Italy next year. We are in the process of putting the package together - one that will be ideal for all levels of riders. We will customize the terrain and rides to *your needs*. Suited for serious riders all the way to enthusiasts looking for their first taste of a riding holiday. Details to come in the coming week.

Outside Magazine: Pick up your copy of Outside Magazine now. You will find a great article on the benefits of TRX Suspension Training (www.fitnessanywhere.com) presented by Matt Dixon, as well as a custom core/stability program designed by purplepatch and fitness anywhere.

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