

# Great Scott

Debutante Carrie Lester may have made the headlines at Ironman Oz, but Brit **Scott Neyedli** triumphed with a solid second-place finish. Here he talks us through his race, while his coach, **Joe Beer**, tells us how they achieved it...



## Pre-race and 3.8km swim

I had breakfast about two hours before the race start, which consisted of a shake and a banana muffin. Then 30 minutes before the race I had my first Powerbar gel of the day.

I wasn't too crazy about the swim start. First of all it was a mass swim start, different to previous years. Secondly we were told at the race briefing that we, the pros, would be given at least a 10m gap. Suffice to say the age-groupers crept forward enough to start right on our heels.

I knew I was one of the strongest swimmers on paper. In the countdown the announcer mistakenly said, "Are you ready

to... go?" A car horn then went off in the excitement, causing the main pro pack to my right to go and then the rest of the field to launch! So I just had to go and set the hammer down to work through the pack, which was already well ahead.

I didn't panic and worked through the frenzy. I got to the front by 400 or 500m and led for 100m or so until another swimmer came through. I'd expended quite a bit of energy to get upfront, so was happy to settle onto the lead feet. I came out the water second in 44:35mins – an Ironman swim PB for me (albeit tide-assisted).

### Coach's view

We've looked long and hard at Scott's in-race feeding to be sure he gets enough but not so much to become overly bloated. No stone is left unturned with the use of caffeine, phosphate loading and recovery nutrients.

We do around 3-5 hours swimming a week, with Monday often a double swim day. When, for example, you do your 100's in 1:14mins, you get a lot done, so monthly volume was only around 12-16 hours. Training post-race, it can be as little as three hours a month!

**KEY LESSON** Work out how much you need to consume for the entire race day – from the moment you wake, through the pre-race, and then the bike and run segments. The key will not be a super-nutrient or foodstuff but being lean, able to consume calories on the day and being aware of what your body is telling you to consume. Consumption rates of 1-2g/kg per hour of carbs are typical, and this should be tried in training, regularly.

Vary your swim volume – it should not be the same all year round – and be sure not to over emphasise what is only around 10-15% of your race time. Think about stroke efficiency, wetsuit-specific endurance swims and good open-water skills.

## 180km bike

I was trying to consume a Powerbar gel every 20-30mins with water. Leg cramp hit at about 135km, so I supplemented with additional electrolytes. I also ran out of my own gels as I dropped a few on the road, so in the last lap of the bike I supplemented with Coke from aid stations. I'd also planned on wearing arm coolers during the bike for additional sun protection, but forgot to put them on in the rush of T1. I'd already put my Fusion compression tubes on before the swim, though, which were handy on both the bike and run legs.

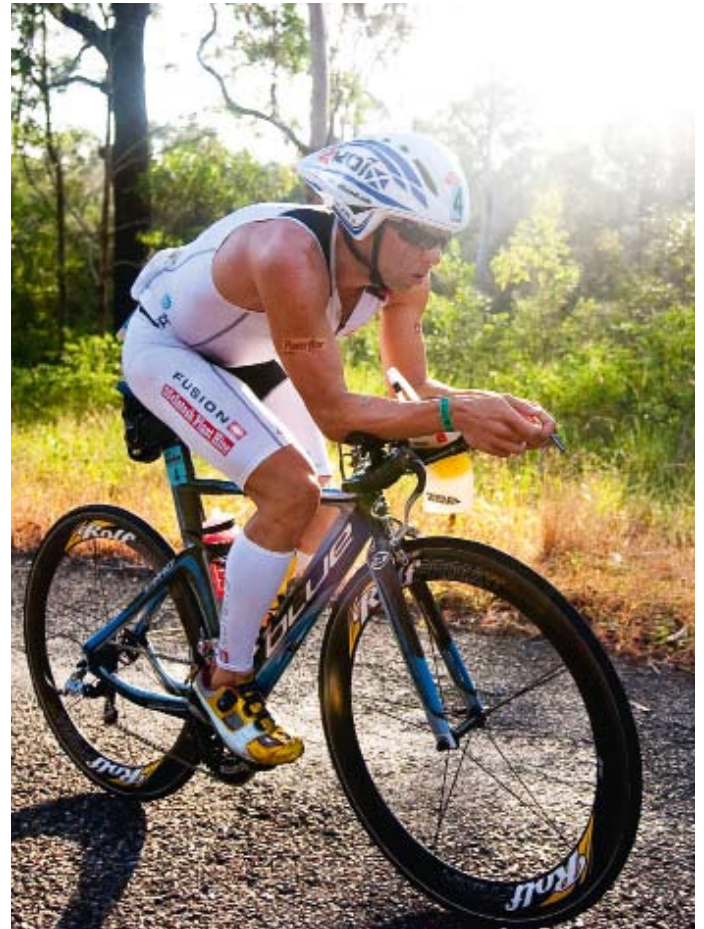
Olivier Marceau went into an early lead, before Paul Ambrose, Patrick Vernay and myself chased him down at 10km, the four of us pushing the pace out front. After the second lap, the lead held at about 3:30mins. I was concerned about being joined by others at the front, so the pace was continually being pushed.

Ambrose made a break and pushed hard to get a 10-15sec gap heading down the final flat with 40km to go. But I was back at the front going into the ghost road section for the final turnaround, our lead extending to around 7mins by T2.

### Coach's view

Peaking at 70 hours in a month and up to a max of 22 hours in a week, the lion's share of time went on biking. Good group rides in Perth made the volume easier to manage mentally over the winter (post Kona to April). Some weeks he did back-to-back 180km rides, so his biking has moved up a level.

**KEY LESSON** You have to be a strong biker to get anywhere near running a solid marathon, so devote your time to riding controlled endurance work and a small amount of harder turbo or group riding. Around 50-60% of your hours should be spent on two wheels, and be sure your backside knows what your race bike saddle feels like.



## 42.2km run

I planned to continue the gel plan as on the bike, but I think I consumed closer to every 30mins. At every aid station I was consuming 1-2 cups of Coke and the same with water and then ice.

Vernay quickly ran down Marceau and they ran side by side as they both passed Ambrose at 2km, who was then leading. I passed Ambrose just after the first turnaround and could see the leaders 1min in front. I felt comfortable in third.

Heading up the hill section at 10km, I caught Marceau descending. But Vernay had held time.

I pushed hard to reel him in as I was still in contention, but heading up the hill climb for the last time, I cramped badly to a walk and then a stop.

I couldn't move until my right hamstring released on the way up. A gap of 2mins opened up, then I cramped again on the descent near the same spot.

The crowd gave me the energy to get back going again. The win had slipped away once more and the final 4km hurt. On reflection, I need to look at my salt intake as the wheels have fallen off in the last two races where I've been within reach of a win.

### Coach's view

Getting Scott to hit Kona, IM W0z and IM Oz with a lower body weight meant he was moving more economically and better able to cope with the heat. The key run change has been insertion of a double run day, clocking 28-30km in the mid-morning and 1hr at 15kmph on the treadmill later. His ability to run at world-class level is now clear.

**KEY LESSON** Learn to run like an Ironman – efficient, controlled pacing under fatigue. Former runners be warned: you must be a strong biker first and foremost. Vary your run training and don't do the same long run every week.