

INTERVIEW WITH BRETT SUTTON

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Thank you for taking the time out to chat with us. Your training philosophy has been called different to a lot of other coaches in the sport, could you explain the core principles that have made you such a successful coach?

My philosophy is very simple there is no difference between a pro and an age grouper. Its just the time one has to train, and the speed at which one goes. Everything else is the same.

So we first need to work out if you're a pro, or you're an over exuberent age grouper, or someone that is doing the sport for the benefits that the three interconnecting sports can provide us with. In enhancing our life style, all three are very different . Somehow triathlon has grown as all three are one and the same under the life style heading.

This is very misleading to the participants themselves. We have life stylers thinking they are pros, we have age groupers who act out their life as pros to the detriment of those around them and we have those who do the sport for its health benefits.

Our philosophy is to look as a life coach at each athlete's circumstance then manufacture a program that enhances their abilities with in that frame work.

We do that from a nicola spirig, down to the slowest age grouper. The philosophy stays the same.

What is your take on Periodisation?

Periodisation, We do not periodise in the same way as we are taught at all the coaching accreditation certificates . It's wrong and does cause huge problems for consistency of racing.

We do fast work in our off season and we do low level long aerobic work even in race week.

It is well documented that you don't believe triathletes need to do weight training, could you explain why?

Weights or musculation. This again is a varience of the terms.

Do we do strength work? Yes. Do we do power endurance work? A big yes. Do we do it two or three times a week? No.

We do some form of it every training day, we will split it as is done when body building and so one day may be legs , next is arms , the next is what you would call core, we would do more of it , than most groups I would think.

Its specific and thus it correlates far better to our three sports, than going into a gym to lift weights. However on occasion we will supplement some athletes with some work if I feel it will help them physically or psychologically.

What advice would you give a self-coached age grouper who wants to know the best way to construct their training program?

I think one should engage a coach, to at least set a program up. We do this at Team TTB, even if it's a month, as the coach can look at the athlete's circumstances in an honest and objective way. This is much more difficult to do, for the individual.

One can then feel confident that the program structure they have, has been developed for them and their unique circumstances. That's why at Team TTB, we do not print out and sell, generic programs . They can only be of a little directional use. I prefer to know the schedules of our customers and build around that to enhance their situation all round, not just in the triathlon department.

If you had an athlete who was significantly weaker in the following, what would you recommend?

Weakness, this is very important, one must look at the time they have to train, and then not add extra for the weakness but to re arrange the schedule so weaknesses are worked on more, thus other things have to be sacrificed. Most age groupers come to me with their program and say they have no time to work on their weakness, yet I see gym, down two times a week, a pillates or yoga class in there and I say "lets replace that with an extra work out on your weakness". Improvement comes almost instantly, in as little time as six weeks. Then I try to educate that six weeks is absolutely instant, six months is a big hurry so it redesigning the individuals thought program also.

Would you ever consider writing an autobiography?

No and yes.

No autobiography but I have written sets of short stories on athletes and camp life and happenings over the years.

I think they are pretty personal to my group, and so I'm just trying to figure out how best to deliver them to fans of Team TTB but also my followers , but to do so with some use to them.

I have had a few publishers talk to me, and since Chrissie's (Wellington) book there has been a few more, but to me it's not important to be published, I wrote the first one in 1998, I didn't publish then, and so I won't now unless I can see them only/ going to my followers who know me want and all and I can provide good value and a bit of a laugh to them.

