Workout Notes and Explanations

Swim:

Submax: this is the pace at which you will be doing most of your IM swim training and racing. It is the pace at which you could swim comfortably for 60 minutes. Early in training, submax swims should include intervals up to 400m. As you progress, long submax swims should have intervals of 500-1000m.

Recovery: These swims are easy, and best done alone. The goal is to relax tight, sore muscles and increase blood-flow to aid in recovery. Pace is submax or less. This is also a good time to work on form.

Form: The primary focus of these workouts is proper technique. The majority of the time should be spent drilling, followed by short swim sets in which the focus is on incorporating the skill which was just practiced into your stroke. These can be combined with recovery swims.

Speed: In these workouts, the main set should include intervals of 50-400m swam hard, but not at an all-out sprint. Actual pace will vary based on interval length, but should remain consistent throughout each interval and the main set. Speed work should be done with perfect form; if you cannot maintain proper technique, drop the pace. If combined with a submax workout, the focus is submax, with several fast intervals incorporated into the main set.

Top Speed: The main set should include intervals of 25-200m at or near top-speed; a top-speed 25 is an all-out sprint. Form is vital, as is proper recovery—recovery interval is equal to work interval. No more than half a top-speed workout is spent on fast intervals; the remainder is warm-up, drills, and cool-down.

Fartlek: Similar to a submax workout, except that speed is varied (both fast and slow) during the intervals of the main set—from a few strokes to a few laps. This is an excellent way to mimic race conditions.

Test: This is a 1000m time trial. After a good warm-up, swim 1000m straight, taking a split every 100m. This is done as fast as possible, but the goal is to hold a steady pace throughout—the last 100 should be swam as fast as the first. Your average pace per 100 is your "T-pace," which is used as a reference point for some swim workouts. This test can be repeated during the Fridays of rest weeks every 8-12 weeks to assess your swim fitness.

Notes:

-after May 1st, at least 2 submax swims per month should be completed in open water, with a focus on sighting and swimming a straight line

Bike:

Submax: The majority of your IM training is at this pace. The main set of these rides are done at 60-70% lactate threshold (LT) power (power zone 2), or 70-80% LT heart rate (HR). Your IM race pace will be in this zone as well. This is the power/HR at which you will complete your long rides.

Threshold: These rides are done at 90-105% of LT power (power zone 4) or 95-100% LT HR. Threshold workouts usually are done as intervals (e.g., 4x10min @ 100%).
V02: These are done at 105-120% LT power, or 100-105% LT HR. V02 workouts are also normally done as intervals.
Recovery: These are done as easy spinning at 50% or less of LT power or 65% or less of LT HR.
VQ Indoor: On Wednesdays in January through March, there will be an IM Canada workout completed on the computrainers at VQ Chicago.

Notes:
-all bike tests will be conducted at VQ Chicago. You will receive information on testing procedures prior to test day
-during the Winter and early Spring, all Saturday bike workouts will be held at VQ Chicago and will provide training specific to the IM Canada bike course.
-a 10 minute transition run should be completed after all of rides 3 hours or longer unless otherwise noted in the plan
-beginning May 1st, all rides over 3 hours should be paced as follows: 1st 1/3 at less then IM power/intensity, 2nd 1/3 at IM power/intensity, last 1/3 at slightly greater than IM power/intensity. If you cannot complete the final third as described, then you went out too hard! Dial it back on the next long ride.

Run:

Recovery: This is done at a very slow, very easy pace to keep the legs moving and blood flowing. The benefit of this workout comes from going slowly!
Submax: This is pace at which you will do your long runs and your IM marathon. HR is 80-85% of run LT HR (Run LT HR is 3-5 beats greater than bike LT HR), which corresponds to Friel HR zone 1 and the lower end of Zone 2. As you progress in your training, you can spend more time in Zone 2 and some time in Zone 3, but no greater than 95% run LT HR.
Tempo: This is the single best run workout to improve your run speed. Tempo pace is noted in the schedule. If you have never done any type of speed work, start at the slower end of the range. All tempo runs should be completed as follows: 10 minute warm-up with gradual increase to tempo pace, then main set, ending with a 10 minute cool-down. The length of the main set is the total workout time minus 20 minutes. Athletes who have never done speed-work should ease into these runs—it is better to run a little slower or a little shorter than risk injury
Strides: This a running form workout. Concentrate on all elements of proper running form such as foot strike, “proud” posture, head up, foot speed, relaxed running, and proper arm movement. You should increase speed slightly with each stride, building to 5k pace by the end of the interval. Run strides are good preparation for faster work to come, and are best performed barefoot, on a grassy surface, but can be done with shoes. After a 10-15 minute warm-up, do 6-8x20 seconds, building pace throughout. 90 second walking recovery back to start. Count your left foot strikes—goal is approximately 30 per 20 seconds.
Fartlek: This is a submax run in which you insert segments of varying length at varying speed. All accelerations and decelerations should be gradual.

Functional Training:

Functional training encompasses core-strength training, flexibility, plyometric excercises, and body-weight based strength training. This includes activities such as yoga, pilates, light weight work, or the functional training classes at Vision Quest. This is an integral part of triathlon training as a stable core and flexible limbs are vital to proper swim, bike, and run form, which is the key to efficiency. If you choose to do weight work, you should begin with high repetitions of low weight. Gradually increase weight with fewer repetitions, peaking in weeks 16-17 and continuing through week 20.

General Notes:

-the KEY workouts for each week in the base and build period are the long swim, bike and run as well as the bricks—these are not to be missed! Second in importance (particularly for advanced IM athletes) is the running and cycling intensity/speed-work
-for novice IM athletes and/or those who have never done cycling or running speed-work: ease into these workouts, holding back for a few weeks until you become comfortable with the intensity. In addition, they can always be converted to submax workouts if you are feeling tired—remember, the key to IM success is frequency and volume!
-in the off-season early base period and for less experienced athletes, frequency is more important than volume or intensity. For example, it is better to get in 4-5 30 minute runs per week rather than two 60 minute runs
-if you do not have enough time to complete an entire workout, get in as much as you can—it is better to get in 30 minutes of a 90 minute ride than nothing
-for all brick workouts, transition time from bike to run should be less than 10 minutes.
-here is a suggested schedule for races leading up to IM Canada: 1/2 marathon in January, aquathon (1.5k swim, 10k run) in February, Sprint or Olympic Tri in April, 1/2 IM in May.
-for the week of May 19 and June 16, there is a swim before the long bike. The transition can be leisurely, up to 60 minutes. During this time you should stretch, have a snack, and relax—there is a long ride coming up!
-please periodically check the website (www.teammagellanimcanada.com) for updated information on VQ clinics and race simulations.

Sample Workouts

Swim

Submax:
Warm-up: 2x100 as 50drill/50swim
Main-set: 4x500 (60) [varying the pace within each 500 would make this a fartlek]
Cool-Down: 200 easy, mixed strokes
Total: 2400

Speed:
Warm-up: 300 easy, 2x100 as 50 free/50 non-free
Main-set: 4x100 (30) as
25 sprint, 75 easy;

25 easy, 25 sprint, 50 easy;
50 easy, 25 sprint, 25 easy;
75 easy, 25 sprint.

3x200 (20), descend (each 200 is faster than the previous one)
4x100 as above
Cool-down: 2x100 as 50 free/50 back
Total: 2100

Form:
Warm-up: 400 easy, 200 non-free
Main-set: 10x50 as 25 drill, 25 swim
200 pull
10x50 as above
2x200 with perfect form
Cool-down: 200 easy, mixed strokes

Bike
Threshold:
Warm-up well, then do 4x10 minutes at 100% LT power or at LT HR (if using HR, gradually build to goal HR) with 4 minute recoveries at 50% LT power/HR in between. Cool-down for 5-10 minutes. Total time: 90 minutes

v02:
Warm-up well, then do 3x10 minutes with each 10 minute block divided as follows: 1 minute at 130% LT power (or upper end of v02 HR zone), 1 min at 50% LT power (recovery HR zone). Each 10 minute block is separated by 7 minutes at 50% LT power (recovery HR zone). Cool-down for 5-10 minutes after last interval.

Drill:
Single leg pedal drill: This is best done on a trainer. After a good warm-up, unclip one foot and rest it on a chair or the trainer stand. With the other foot, think about making smooth, round pedal strokes with no dead spot—drive the pedal forward from the 9 o'clock position to the 3 o'clock position at the top of the stroke, and at the bottom think about trying to scrape mud off the bottom of your shoe.