



"Your Bike & You" Info Night Recap

Hey everyone,

This is a quick recap of all that we covered on the Warringah Triathlon Club info night I held last Thursday. To begin with we outlined the four different components to every bike.

1. Frame
2. Wheels
3. Components (gears/brakes etc)

AND THE MOST IMPORTANT COMPONENT....

4. THE RIDER

Frame...

Road versus Time Trial- each have their benefits and there is no easy answer to this. If you are competing for fun, fitness and just to enjoy the sport, then a road bike will probably suit you a little better. If you have slightly higher aspirations in the sport or are competing in long course, then the triathlon frame may suit you better.

Carbon versus Alloy- The benefits of carbon are improved comfort, greater strength and decreased weight. The only downside to carbon is the cost. Alloy bikes are cheaper, however as technology filters through, carbon is becoming increasingly accessible.

Wheels...

Clincher- These wheels are the ones that use normal tubes and tyres. As technology has improved these wheels are now on-par with tubular wheels in terms of weight and aerodynamics. They are also a considerably cheaper option in the event of flat tyres.

Tubular- These wheels require tyres to be glued on. In the past they were a higher performance option for racing. The downsides are the high cost of replacing the tyre if you get a puncture, they are also quite awkward to replace and need to be glued to the rim. These are still great wheels, but my opinion is that clinchers are better.

Tyre Pressures- These will vary greatly for each person, course and the conditions. For bumpy surfaces, in wet conditions or for lighter athletes then a lower pressure will increase the surface area on the road and provide a more comfortable, fast and stable ride. When the road is smooth, dry or for bigger riders then a higher pressure can be used. I have put a little guide below for you.

Wet conditions – 90-110psi

Bumpy roads – 90-110psi

Smooth roads- 110-130psi

Groupset...

Campagnolo- Good quality but quite expensive in Australia

SRAM- I don't mind it on my TT bike but don't like it for road bikes. I mainly don't like the 'Double Tap' technology on their gear shifters. This is just my opinion, and others will differ.

Shimano- For me Shimano is the best, most reliable, most available and affordable. All of their groupsets are good quality, even the lower range stuff. For a road bike, Di2 (electronic gearing) is cool but a bit of a novelty. On a time trial bike, Di2 comes into its own and if you can afford it then you will not regret it. Having the option of shifting gears on the base bar and the aerobars makes this the groupset to own.



And now getting into the most important aspect of the bike..... **the RIDER**

*** The most aerodynamic position is the one you can hold for the distance of your event ***

Contact Points-

Hands- Our hands require a nice comfortable surface for our hands otherwise we run the risk of a condition called “Cyclists Palsy”. This is when the ulnar nerve that runs into our hands gets compressed and over time can cause a loss of strength, sensation and mobility. The simplest way to fix this problem is to disperse the pressure and keep the brake hoods and handlebars flat. Other ways to help include wearing padded gloves and gel bar tape.

*Saddle-*As a rule for saddles, we don’t want to see any extreme angles going on. You want your saddle to be pretty level, give or take 1-2 degrees. If you find yourself with some extreme angles going on, it needs to be fixed. An ‘angled-up’ saddle can lead to poor pelvic rotation and pain in places that we don’t want pain. An ‘angled-down’ saddle can lead to excessive strain on the hands, arms, shoulders and neck. Saddles are also a very individual thing; don’t be surprised if the stock standard saddle that comes on your bike doesn’t quite work for you. If the saddle height and for/aft are set up correctly, and the saddle is still uncomfortable, then quite often it is that this just isn’t the saddle for you.

Feet- Possibly the most important of the three contact points, this is the pathway for all power on our bike and also the source of most injuries. For a ‘triathlon’ set up, usually a rear-ward set cleat position is more beneficial as it takes some of the pressure off our calves and saves them for the run. It is very important to have these set up correctly as each person is different and if they aren’t correctly aligned then you are running the risk of hot-spots in the feet, ankle and knee or hip injuries.

Band Aid fixes and Misconceptions-

A band aid fix in bike set up is anything you change based on the generic rules that are out there.

- Back hurts – lower seat
- I’m a triathlete – get as low as possible
- Feel like I’m over-reaching – shorten stem

There are lots of these out there and they are not always correct. As an example, if we feel we are overreaching then it could be any number of thing including the seat being too high, the stem being too long, the handlebars being incorrectly positioned, the saddle for/aft being incorrect. This is just designed to illustrate that it’s not wise to make changes unless you know it’s the right one as there are many factors that a source of concern could be attributed to.

Bike Fitting-

For those who have any questions then I am more than happy to answer them. If you have any issues or concerns with your current set-up then get in touch and we can sort them out. As many in the club will attest to, the modest investment of a bike fitting will make your experience on two wheels much more enjoyable and comfortable while enhancing performance and reducing the risk of injury.



And in addition, I have a special announcement which I made on the night.

I am commencing uFIT Training. This will be the beginning of the coaching side of uFIT and I am inviting you to be the first ones to sign up. I will be offering my coaching services initially to a very select number of athletes and will grow this over time.

You will get access to my decade of racing and training experience and I will help you towards achieving your own triathlon goals.

If this is something you would be interested in then please get in touch and we can discuss how we can achieve your goals.