
THE SPINNING WHEEL

Thriving for “girl power” in our team

Focus Cycling is very proud of the accomplishments demonstrated by its members over the past few months. Whether individually or as a relay team, our efforts have begun to pay off and in a big way. Nothing makes us more proud than the effort put forth by our ladies. Particularly during the



latest iteration of the Mack Cycle Trilogy, the oldest triathlon series in South Florida. During the last leg of this trilogy, held on October 20, 2019, our ladies' relay team clocked a phenomenal second place overall. Essentially, the ladies have kicked “you know what.” With a very busy schedule ahead of us—one that will take us all the way into several marathons and centuries well into the second quarter of 2020—we are certain to collect more podiums, and our ladies are just the ticket to achieve them. Congratulations, girls?

Left to right: Paige, Rinie and Edelmira, sharing the podium with another group of awesome ladies from Tri2one.

And the accomplishments are not limited to the ladies. Our very own Running and Swimming Coach, Jeand Duno has also broken numerous records, including the overall position for all Aquathlons this season. Jeand is a credit to our team, as well as a dedicated and utterly professional athlete. We are lucky to have him amongst us and we hope to continue to profit from his knowledge and incredible stamina for running and swimming.

It should be noted that because of their efforts, Focus Cycling Club was invited to accept a medal on behalf of the officials for having dominated the series in at least one of the disciplines, for the entire season.

The athlete behind this accomplishment is precisely our Coach, Jeand Duno. What does 2020 have in store for us? Simple: more podium across-the-board.

“I am a natural born runner with many years of experience and many miles under my feet. I am glad to be working with the members of our team.”

-JEADN DUNO



Jeand Duno receiving a medal for the outstanding work performed during the Mack Cycle Trilogy.



There is a member of our team who is not only a Coach, but also a gentleman. We take a pause here to acknowledge his efforts and recognize just how much Rey Gonzalez has done for Focus Cycling Club from day one. He has given us far more than just Coaching. He has helped us with numerous disciplines to come who we are today. Ray, you are an intricate part of this team and we are lucky to have you.

A candid interview with one of our founders

Earlier this month, we had an opportunity to sit down with one of the founders of Focus Cycling Club for a candid conversation about the club, its future, and some of the ups and downs that brought them to this day. Karin Steegmayer is a self-motivated, ultra-positive lady who left the comfort of her home and career for political reasons, only to come to a new country, start from scratch and never lose focus with positive thinking. And perhaps here is the genesis of the name she picked for her club: Focus.

Q: I understand that you were an attorney back home. How difficult has it been to adjust to a new life after such a wonderfully-crafted career?

A: It's never easy for any of us, and I am not alone because there are a lot of my countrymen and women who found themselves in a similar situation. When you forgo so much, it's like hitting bottom and then surging upward. Usually, you come back to the surface much stronger. It's all about knowing yourself and maintaining optimism throughout.



Q: What prompted you to create this Club?

A: It all started with the need to earn a living. When you are removed from what you thought was your lifelong career, your mind spins faster and ideas and recourses come to you a lot quicker. Sort of a “call to action.” I started with spinning lessons, then moved into providing these lessons under water through Aquabike, and one day, a little over a year ago, a gathered a group of friends and decided to start a bicycle ride. I was lucky to have the support and cooperation of our co-founders, Champion Leo Torcat and Rey Gonzalez, and the rest is history. The ride grew into two and three rides a week, and then Centuries and Triathlons, and now we have one of the fastest growing clubs in the area.

Q: Every organization has ups and downs, what about Focus Cycling Club?

A: Absolutely. Fortunately, I do not feed on negative occurrences. I let them go by the wayside and move on because I believe life will always have good and bad. As a Club we were subjected to some poor treatment, or rather misjudgment, by some former members, but I would never let us make a big issue out of it. Instead, our success speaks volumes about how we handle such circumstances.

Q: What makes Focus Cycling so unique?

A: We are a different type of Club. We are a community-involved group of athletes. Anyone can ride a bicycle at any given time. But few athletes dedicate time and effort to assisting others with riding, swimming, and running. Beyond the obvious “raison d'être” there is the community involvement with our own Autism program as well as our potential association with the County in order to advance the “Share the Road” initiative. Autism has been a dominating—albeit in a quiet way—point in my new career. It is not about what able bodies and mind can do. That’s an easy one. It’s all about what we are doing to help those who seemingly cannot do it. Oddly, they can if we spend a little time showing them how. That is the gist of our conversations with the County.



Q: And that is a good follow-on question. Tell me about this “Share the Road” initiative.

A: We are also an educational organization. We are dedicated to safety and security when walking, driving, and riding. As such, we have developed educational programs—as you will see in our revised website—dedicated to this type of awareness in our community. We were invited by the County to hold discussions about the possibility of joining hands in this endeavor. I believe that very soon you will see a successful outcome from those discussions.

Q: Is that the new direction of the Club?

A: Not at all. It is one of the branches of the Club. We are expanding into numerous disciplines, all of which are intricately tied to education. We want to leave behind a legacy of athletic achievement, community participation, and awareness.

Q: What’s next for Focus Cycling Club?

A: More of the same...and then some. The club will continue to move in the same direction, with the same Coaches doing the same thing, but always focused on the community and education. Think of us as an organization dedicated to the improvement of others by every mean available to us. It is actually as simple as that. Does that answer your question?

Indeed it does, Ms. Steegmayer, indeed it does. For some reason, Karin leaves us feeling that there are more exciting things coming our way. Whether through education, athleticism, or community participation, it seems as if Focus Cycling Club’s growth is solidly anchored on purpose. And in life, purpose is everything.

Golden Rules of Criterium Racing

Criteriums. They're a staple of the local racing scene in Australia, the U.S., the UK and in many other places around the world. These frenetic races of roughly an hour are raced on the road but racing a 'crit' is very different to taking part in a road race.



The style of racing is different, the fitness requirements are different, and the tactics are different. The races are shorter, faster, more technical and, depending on who you ask, a lot more fun.

Here are a few things to keep in mind when you line up for your next crit:

Don't panic

The first 20 minutes of the race will be fast and furious with plenty of attacks and breakaway attempts. Rarely does the winning move come in these opening 20 minutes. In most cases the race doesn't truly begin until the last half. While everyone else is blowing themselves to bits in the first half of the race, sit in, conserve your energy, and wait for the action to really heat up.

Attacking

Attack like you mean it. Sometimes a "soft attack" will work in road racing, but there's rarely such a thing in crit racing. Since the pace is fast, you need to attack even faster. Don't attack from 30 places down. By the time you hit the front of the peloton you'll be tired out.

Never attack from the very front either — you want to be jumping from somewhere within the top 10 positions. And when you do make your move, see if you can enlist someone to come with

you. When you make your big move, see if you can convince someone to come with you. It will be a lot easier if you've got someone to share the wind with.

Avoid overlapping wheels

You are responsible for your front wheel. If someone in front of you changes their line and clips your front wheel, that's your fault, not theirs.

Cornering

When it comes time to corner — and you'll be doing this a lot — hold your line and follow the wheel in front. Don't let that wheel go — you can burn a lot of energy by accelerating out of corners to try and catch back on. And when the race involves more than a hundred corners, that's a lot of wasted energy. Get down low, weight the front wheel to get more traction, and glide through the corner in the slipstream. Never, ever try to overtake through the corners on the inside! Always remember the motto: "Inside suicide". Overtaking on the inside isn't just unsafe, it will make you thoroughly unpopular in the bunch in no time at all. To learn more, find out how to avoid common cornering mistakes and how to nail your high-speed cornering.

Conserve your energy

In criteriums, as in all road racing events, energy conservation is the name of the game. Get to the closing kilometres with plenty in the tank and you'll improve your chances of a great result.

Move up through the bunch or attack during the lulls. There's no sense trying to gain places when the bunch is strung out at 50km/h. There's further to go to move up and it takes more energy to do so.

Read the race

When you're deciding whether to bridge up to a break, take a good look at who's in it. Do those riders have a reputation for making a break stick? How many seconds ahead are they? Are the right combination of teams represented in the break (if you're racing in a teams event)? How far into the race is the break? What is the body language of the rest of the peloton? Are the same riders doing all the work? Are they getting tired? One of the biggest parts of reading a race is knowing your competitors.

Take a lap out

Remember, if you have a legitimate mechanical, crash, or puncture you're allowed to make your way to the pit, get it fixed, and join back in. Often your first instinct is to chase back on. It's within the

rules to take a lap out. The commissaires have seen all the tricks, so make sure it's legit or you'll be forced to chase.

Positioning

Stay *at* the front, but not *on* the front. In a hotdog crit, you want to be in the top 20. The further back you are on a tight circuit, the more pronounced the concertina effect is at the rear of the pack. In a fast flowing crit it's good to stay in the top third of the bunch. Remember, if you're not constantly moving forwards, you're moving backwards. Bear in mind that it's easy to get boxed in when you're hiding from the wind. Place yourself at the edges of the group so you can move up easily at the opportune time (preferably the downwind side). Placing yourself at the edges also allows you to catch a free ride as riders come past and move up in the bunch.

Breakaway strategies

So you've been on the attack all day and you've finally made the move that's stuck. Now what? It's not a matter of going as hard as you can. You have to know how to manage the gap, if you need to attack again, when to put in a soft attack, when to counter-attack, when to sit in, when to take a pull, and when to give up.

The sprint

Quite often the final sprint isn't to the finish line — it's to the final corner. Most crits will have a corner roughly 200-300m from the finish line. If you don't come into that corner positioned properly you'll have no chance of winning the sprint.

The optimal position depends on the distance from the corner to the finish line — the closer the corner to the finish, the closer you should be to the front.



How to prepare for the Miami Marathon

Whether you are just starting to run, or are training for your next PR, working with a one-on-one coach provides you all the instruction, accountability and motivation you need to reach your goals. Your Focus Cycling Coach will provide education, support and a fully customized training plan. You will talk with your coach on a regular basis, so they can update your training plan according to your progress and schedule. Our coaches have experience from the mile to the marathon and even ultras, so you are sure to find a coach who has the experience you need.

Your training program will include all the workout types you need to reach your goal, matched to your busy schedule. Whether you travel frequently or are trying to fit your training around your favorite social running group, having a coach can help you put it all together. In anticipation of a phenomenal experience, our coaches have prepared the following schedule for all members:

- **BI-WEEKLY Coaching** 60-minute calls for program review, educational topics and motivation. Highly detailed program design updated in **14-day increments**
- Custom Training Plan Updated bi-weekly
- **Weekly Email Communication** 1 contact & support request weekly to your Focus coach via email.

Preparing for the Miami Marathon and Half Marathon with our coaches offers you great benefits, such as:

- **Knowledge & Expertise:** Our certified coaches combine your passion for running but from a scientific approach. We'll teach you the physiology & essentials about training & nutrition for before, during & after your run.
- **Customized Training Plan:** Your customized training plan includes workouts designed for you.
- **Improved Workouts:** No more guess work on how & when to train. Your coach provides you with quality, customized workouts including hills, tempo runs, intervals and cross training.
- **Motivation & Accountability:** Whether you choose a biweekly or weekly program, your coach will be the mentor you need to get you through the highs & lows of training.
- **Unlimited Resources:** Members have direct access to the best in class resources including the latest in training equipment, and expert advice in nutrition, injury prevention & how to run as a team.

For more information, contact one of our Coaches at your convenience and start to prepare for the best Marathon and Half Marathon in the East Coast!