

IRONMAN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP 70.3 BIKE COURSE PREVIEW

FINISH

56

48

Average high temp on race day is 96 degrees. Lowery warns athletes, "It's 8-10 degrees hotter by the lake than in the city."

START

0

NORTHSHORE RD.

38

40

5

14

17

23

The roads outside the park will all be closed to cars, but they will be open inside the park.

All the roads are newly paved.

After five years of complaints and criticism surrounding the Ironman World Championship 70.3 course in Clearwater, Fla., the prestigious mid-distance championship has relocated to Lake Las Vegas. Florida's pancake-flat bike course, which was blamed for creating massive drafting packs, has been replaced with the wind, hills and heat of the desert. The athletes of Team Trek/K-Swiss ventured out to Henderson, Nev., this spring to train on the new course. They and race director Frank Lowery shared their detailed knowledge of the course, and everyone agrees: Be prepared for a tough ride.

Mile 0-2: The climb away from Lake Las Vegas toward Lake Mead Drive lasts almost 2 miles at a steady 3-4 percent grade.

Miles 5 and 40: Entrance/exit to Lake Mead National Recreation Area, the wind can come from any direction," warns Lowery. "There's no rhyme or reason as to where it comes from, but there is no hiding from it."

Mile 14: Aid stations at mile markers 14, 28, 40 and 47 will be stocked with water and Powerbar Ironman Perform.

Mile 17: "It's constant 3- or 4-minute hills on the way out and back as soon as you're in [Lake Mead State] Park.

The longest is leading to the turnaround," says 2009 Xterra World Championship runner-up Lesley Paterson.

Mile 23: After riding through the turnaround, be prepared to face a headwind. "The wind takes your momentum on the downhill. You have to go as hard downhill as you do up," says Heather Jackson.

Mile 38: "The climb shoots straight up," says Lowery. "It's just a bear."

Miles 48-56: The ride into T2 is a gradual, constant climb through the city of Henderson. "It almost looks like a false flat, so it could be easy to get a little disillusioned," says Paterson. Lowery says it's a "phantom hill that can make a fool out of you if you're not careful." The course gains about 450 feet of altitude from T1 to T2. "The roads in the city are not technical at all. There are very few times to get out of the aerobars," according to Lowery.

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