



## Event Briefing – Canada 70.3

Updated: Sept 2017

*This Briefing is provided by Ironman Certified Coaches from Total Intensity Sports.  
If you have questions or are interested in personalized coaching for your next event, contact us at  
[www.totalintensitysports.com](http://www.totalintensitysports.com)*

### General Info

**Distance:** Half Ironman  
**Location:** Whistler, British Columbia, Canada  
**Time of Year:** Late July  
**Website:** [www.ironman.com/triathlon/events/americas/ironman-70.3/canada.aspx](http://www.ironman.com/triathlon/events/americas/ironman-70.3/canada.aspx)

**Insider Info:** Unique aspect of this 70.3 event – there is an Ironman distance going on simultaneously on the same course. The Ironman athletes start their swim about 2 hours before the 70.3 athletes. This allows the Ironman athletes to be completely started on the bike course before the 70.3 athletes. The two events share the same course. The bike course is essentially an out-and-back to the south of Whistler, and another one to the north. The Ironman bike course goes farther in each direction than the 70.3 course. As a result, for the initial 50 miles or so of the bike course, Ironman athletes will share the course with the 70.3 athletes. The run course is the same for both distances, the Ironman athletes complete it twice, while the 70.3 athletes complete it once. A large percentage of the 70.3 athletes will be finishing before the Ironman athletes, but there should still be athletes of both distances on the course together while the Ironman athletes are on their first lap. All in all, the race goes very smoothly with both distances racing simultaneously.

- Transition areas are in two separate locations, approximately 2-3 miles apart. Dropping off bikes and gear bags in T1 and T2 the day before the race will be required. You will, however, have access to your T2 (and T1) bags prior to the start of the race.

### Swim

**Start Time:** 8.45 am for the age groupers (no pro field)  
**Start Type:** Rolling Start, Self-Seeded  
**Distance:** 1.2 miles  
**Venue:** Alta Lake is a very clean mountain lake.  
**Insider Info:**

- One loop on a counterclockwise rectangle.
- Water Temperatures: typically upper-60s F. Very comfortable.

- Transportation (busses) is provided to get from the transition area to the swim start. It's very hard to get there with any other option. Since the Ironman athletes also use these busses, there are longer lines.
- It is typically cold in the morning prior to the race – having someone prepared to take your pre-race clothes or using the race's morning clothes drop off option is recommended.
- The full ironman athletes start at 6.50am and complete the same course (two loops). The 70.3 start is after the Ironman athletes are well into or completely finished with their swim.
- There is a lot of waiting around prior to the race – try to stay off your feet as much as possible and bring extra calories to keep your fuel tank full.

## **Bike**

Distance: 56 miles

Course Type: Roads, wide shoulders, mostly smooth pavement.

Direction/Laps:

- This is a point-to-point ride. The main road through town (Hwy 99) is the main route. You do one out-and-back to the south, return to Whistler, and then do a longer out-and-back to the north.

Insider Info:

- The southern out-and-back is mostly rolling with some steady climbs. While it isn't as hilly as the northern part of the course, it is definitely not flat.
- The farthest part of the northern out-and-back is essentially a steep descent down a long hill and then a very challenging climb back to Whistler – training for a long climb towards the end of your training rides is very important.
- Be sure to fuel a little more than usual right after you crest the final climb. You burn more calories while climbing so maybe a few extra calories than normal at the end of the bike would be a good idea. You might not realize you didn't fuel enough until you start the run.
- Great crowds will be on Hwy 99 as you pass through Whistler. Don't expect a lot of crowds outside of this area.

## **Run**

Distance: 13.1 miles

Course Type: bike path, some trails.

Direction/Laps: One lap of a course which first includes a loop around Lost Lake and then a long out-and-back section. At the end of the out-and-back, you go to the finish line.

Insider Info:

- Course is mostly flat with a some rolling hills. The 1-2 miles along Green Lake before the turnaround after aid stations is a slog of an uphill, but you'll get the benefit of the slight downhill on the return.
- There can be a lot of casual bike riders on the course around Lost Lake so be prepared for that.
- The course is, to say the least, beautiful. Lake side running in the mountains.

- Once you finish the out-and-back and get back to the village, there is an additional section (around a mile) through the village which loops you around the transition area and to a downhill finish. Don't let up till you get into the finishing chute!
- BEARS! Bears are known to frequent the course.
- Crowds concentrate around one area – which is the beginning of the run, end of the loop around Lost Lake and end of the out-and-back section.

### Transition Area

**IMPORTANT!** Due to the size of the race field, transition area is quite large. Make sure you familiarize yourself with the logistics and directions of the ins and outs of T1 and T2. Determine exactly where you will be going as you enter transition and look for your transition spot and as you leave transition. The directions you run through transition can also be a little confusing. Check this out on Friday and Saturday to be ready on race day.

- Railroad track crossing-BE CAREFUL! It can be slippery and has gaps that you can get caught in.
- The first 30 yards or so after the mount line is uphill so starting in an easy gear and with your shoes on your feet is recommended.

### Race Cut-Offs

**Swim:**

10:10 am and 10:20 am (exit out of T1)

Each athlete will have 1 hour and 10 minutes to complete the swim course. Any athlete taking longer than 1 hour and 10 minutes from their start time (rolling start) will receive a DNF. The course will officially close 1 hour and 10 minutes after the final athlete starts.

Athletes must be out of transition and starting the bike course by 10:20 am or you will not be permitted to continue.

**Bike:**

2:30pm and 2:40pm (exit out of T2)

Due to the nature and limited timeframes for road closures, there will be additional preliminary cut-off times for the bike course.

- 11:45am - Hwy 99 and Callaghan Valley Rd (northbound)
- 12:15pm - Hwy 99 and Village Gate Boulevard (northbound)

**Run:**

5:30pm

Due to the nature and limited timeframes for road closures, there will be two preliminary cut-off times for the run course.

- 4:15pm - Turn around at out-and-back (the far end of Green Lake)

### Other Important Topics

**Pre-Race Check-In**

Ironman does allow day before check-in for 70.3s but there is a lot to do pre-race so it is better to check-in two days before or as early as possible. At check-in, you'll get a wrist band that you must wear all weekend. This gets you in and out of transition area, post-race food, and into everything IM-related (except the VIP tent). You'll also have to sign a medical information release form and double check your emergency contact and health information card. You'll get your race

bag here with your swim cap, bib number, three gear bags (explained below), and some goodies. You'll also get your chip just before you exit the Ironman check-in tent.

### **Ironman Gear Bags**

When you check in you will receive three gear bags: morning clothes bag, bike gear bag, and run gear bag. The morning clothes bag is for you to put whatever you are wearing pre-race into once you get your wetsuit on and are ready to head to the start line. You can either give this bag to your family or you can drop it off at the bins they have in T1, which will be available to you after you finish the race. If you put your phone or iPod in this bag, you may want to put it in a ziplock baggie just to be sure it doesn't get wet. Many people put their wetsuit and swim gear in this bag just to transport it with you in the morning when you head to the race venue. The next bag is the bike gear bag, which will have everything you need for the bike-helmet, shoes, socks, clothing, nutrition (if not already attached to your bike), sunglasses, etc. In your run bag, you will include your running shoes, socks, race number belt, nutrition, water bottle, hat or visor, etc. You will turn in your bike and run gear bags the day before the race. There is no transition set-up for Ironman. Everything goes into your bag which will be laid out in number order, as you'll see when you drop it off the day before the race.

**IMPORTANT** – due to the presence of bears in the area, **NO** food is allowed in your gear bags when you leave them the day before race day. These can **ONLY** be added the morning of the race.

### **Schedule of Events**

- Always use the official Schedule of Events (put online 4-6 weeks before the event) for specifics.
- Practice Swim (1-2 days before race day)
- Mandatory Bike & Gear Check-In (day before race day)
- Athlete Check-In (2-4 days before race day; Important: Athlete Check-In will NOT be open on race day.)

### **Race Day Parking**

- Parking is near the finish line / transition area. Busses transport athletes to the swim start. The general public is generally not allowed to use this transportation. There is a walking trail that runs from the T2/Finish/Village area down to the lake and swim start. It's about 2 miles, but a good option for spectators.