



Timothy O'Donnell

AGE 33
5 FEET 11 INCHES
162 POUNDS
BOULDER, COLORADO

THOUGH O'DONNELL has been competing in full Ironman triathlons for only three years, he's already one of the best in the country. During his 2011 rookie season he won Ironman Texas, and his fifth-place finish made him the fastest American at the 2013 Ironman World Championship in Kona, Hawaii. Credit the discipline he gained at the U.S. Naval Academy, as well as inspiration from his wife, two-time Ironman world champion Mirinda Carfrae. This month in Kona, O'Donnell will try to end the U.S.'s 12-year absence from the top of the podium. BY GORDY MEGROZ

→“All the training I do is based on heart rate. In the past, I would ride easy for six hours with my heart rate at 120. It was base mileage—time in the saddle—but I wasn't getting as much out of it as I could have. This year I started training at about 140 to 150. I'm not just out for a Sunday cruise chatting with friends anymore. The result is that my power output is higher, and it's taught my body to better use fat as fuel.”

→“I try to eat frequent small meals. In the morning before I swim, I'll have a cup of coffee and a Clif Bar and I'm out the door. Then after the workout I'll have some eggs. Throughout the day, I'll graze on things like turkey, cheese, and mixed nuts, then have a normal dinner of chicken, veggies, and a baked potato.”

→“Proper bike fit is crucial for efficiency. I did some wind-tunnel testing at the beginning of the year and made a

small change to my saddle position. That lowered my back by about 12 degrees and decreased my time on the bike by about nine minutes.”

→“I love red wine. Usually, if my wife and I open a bottle, we'll finish it. If we do that, we'll use it as our carbohydrate source and cut out the baked potato.”

→“I'm a big fan of Compex units, which are basically portable electrical stimulation machines (see “Damage Control,” opposite). I have a lot of calf issues. When they get tight, I hook up the machine and it sends electrical pulses into the muscles.”

→“Obviously, you don't want to tire yourself out having sex before a race, but being happy and having a clear head is important. If you've been abstaining from sex for a few weeks to improve performance but you're on edge, I don't think that's beneficial.”