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### Ironman Kona: Dave Scott



By [Guest Blogger](#)  
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[Dave Scott](#) is the ultimate triathlete. This six-time [Ironman Kona](#) champion is only one of a handful who have won the coveted top spot three times in a row. And although he's no longer racing, he's still in the game. The proof: He guided both winners of this year's race, Craig Alexander of Australia and Chrissie Wellington of the UK. Here's his take on Kona.

--Aileen Torres

#### Who did you train for Ironman this year?

I served as an adviser for both Craig Alexander and Chrissie Wellington. I've worked with Craig on strength and

recovery programs for the last year, and Chrissie's complete program for the last three months. I just help keep them on track.

#### What's a training regimen for the race like?

Most amateurs need to put in a minimum of about 13 hours per week--training in each discipline a minimum of about three hours per week, plus a strength session--that's the bare minimum. The bulk of the athletes train 17 to 23 hours per week. Chrissie and Craig are training about 40 hours per week for this race. They train just about every day, doing about three sessions per day, covering all of the disciplines, plus

a strength session--that's the bare minimum. The bulk of the athletes train 17 to 23 hours per week. Chrissie and Craig are training about 40 hours per week for this race. They train just about every day, doing about three sessions per day, covering all of the disciplines, plus strength training.

#### How did you handle the transition from racer to coach?

Pretty comfortably. I've always felt I was a better teacher than an athlete. I started teaching when I was relatively young. I taught a master swimmers program when I was 19 and through college. By the time I left school, my program had grown to 400 people. I like the puzzle of putting together a program, and in this sport, everyone is unique. You need to understand the nuances of each athlete, and manage overload, progression, and recovery differently for each. It's an intricate web when you're putting that together across three disciplines for a long period of time. You need to push the athletes sufficiently but allow enough recovery and recoil so they can do it again. When I was an athlete, I didn't have a coach--managing myself was always a little bit more of an adventure, trying to balance the tenacity with some common sense.

#### Any gear recommendations for triathletes in training?

Heart rate monitors have been utilized by athletes for well over 20 years, since I've been involved in the sport. But today's models allow you to do amazing things. The [Timex Ironman Race Trainer](#) allows you to download the data to your computer, so we can do all kinds of comparative analysis and future reference. I use the heart rate monitors with all my athletes, and I cross-reference that with whatever gear they have, be it sports watches, power meter, pedometers, or whatever.

Additionally, the bikes are far superior now to what I used in my career. They are lighter, faster, more responsive. The new skin-tight suits absolutely provide an advantage during the swim. I can't make the determination of what's legal in the sport and what's not, but I think we need to be pretty clear-cut in our sport for what is allowed in the future, so it doesn't lead to any unfair advantages.

#### Who did you expect to win Ironman this year? Were you surprised by the winners?

I wasn't surprised at all. I have relationships with both Chrissie and Craig, and I know their work ethics. They were the reigning champions, and they both repeated, so obviously I'm pleased with the outcome and extremely happy for them. But that doesn't dilute the accomplishments of

the other athletes. The struggle that they both went through to take the race was inspiring, to overcome such huge levels of physical discomfort. Mirinda Carfrae had a fantastic run. She is someone to watch. [Chris Lieto](#) ran his best race ever and finished second--everyone respects him. So for Craig and Chrissie to win, it was an extraordinary effort.

#### What was your best finish at Ironman, and how did you get yourself into top shape for it?

I'd say the six wins were all my best. Most of the time, I did all three disciplines every day, taking a day off every six to nine days. I'd also strength train three times per week. When I look at the race that meant the most to me as an athlete, it was coming in second when I was 40 in 1995, after being out of the sport for five years. Finishing fifth in 1996 wasn't anything special on paper, but was a big victory for me personally.

#### How can we get Americans to care about Ironman again?

I think Americans do care. There are Americans out there performing at the highest level. For Americans to win the race again, they have to have good coaching for a number of years. When I see the American athletes here year in and year out, I don't see the consistency I'd like to see. So I question the advice and the training they are getting--with the exception of Chris Lieto. He had an extraordinary day today. He made a great mark.

#### Who should we watch for next year?

You have to go with the people who are consistent and who run well. I always like athletes who are able to get off of their bike and improve during the run. I always look for who's going to be strongest near the end. You can't overlook Chrissie and Craig, and you have to recognize Chris's and Andreas Raelert's races today. You have to go into this race with a blind face and a certain kind of meanness that says: "I can beat anyone. I can override any amount of pain."

When most people ask me that question they're befuddled by the short list I give them. But the list is short because there are only a few who, I think, really believe that they can win when they get into a big race like the Ironman.