



Episode 29 Transcript

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Kris Gethin Crosses The Finish Line

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Welcome, everyone, to my birthday podcast.

Heather Eastman: Happy birthday.

Nick: My birthday happens to be whatever random ass day this gets published.

Heather: That's true.

Nick: Really, welcome to the finish line, the last man standing or sitting over here is [Kris Gethin](#). None other than the Man of Iron himself. I'm [Nick Collias](#), an editor for Bodybuilding.com. Our co-host is Heather Eastman, as always.

Heather: Hello, everyone.

Nick: There's whole other [podcast](#) out there where you talk about the [Man of Iron](#) prep. There are also 18 and counting episodes of the Man of Iron series documenting your experience. But long story short, you've been preparing for a full Ironman for six months. Not one year, not 18 months but

just six months, right, and last Sunday, you finished it.

Kris Gethin: I did it, I completed it. That was the entire goal, it wasn't trying to break any records because I'm not going to be going out there and trying to do that. I would run out of gas. I was very proud of myself that I was able to apply disciplinary action to take my time, pace myself, because no one was going to remember if I did it in 13, 14, 16 hours. I, and they, would remember if I did or did not finish. I paced myself and happily finished.

Nick: See, that's a great approach to that. Something that I think a lot of endurance athletes can learn from, because they sometimes live and die by those numbers as opposed to just accomplishing the feat.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, and not just top athletes, just anybody participating. The amount of people that I saw walking on the marathon because they'd pushed it probably a little too hard, either on a swim or the bike, or both. They were falling like flies there.

Nick: This is 6 AM to what, start in the dark, finish in the dark?

Kris Gethin: Yeah, pretty much. I think I started probably around 6:30 AM. The pros started at 6, and then I put myself in a swim time, probably a little bit faster than what I could do just because I wanted to get out there.

Nick: Ahead of the writhing mass of bodies.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, and because I knew it was going to be a very, very hot day and I thought, "I don't want to be out there any longer than I have to be, so let's get it done with now." I finished, probably, it was about 9 o'clock, about 9 o'clock in the evening.

Nick: My five-year-old and I were following you via the Ironman page, and I remember, it was about 8 o'clock, and I thought, "He's probably done by now." I looked and said, "Oh, he still had six miles to go." I said, "Oh, that poor bastard." Were you feeling that way at that point or were you just-

Kris Gethin: No, I felt good because like I said, I'd paced myself, I was able to run pretty much the whole way. Just a very, very slow run. I was probably running at a 10 and a half, 11 minute pace. I would stop at every single aid station except for the last lap, just to put ice down my top, down my shorts, and under my cap. In the half I did when I had to, and I perspired so much, and I struggled. This time I did it before I had to and it kept me cool, and I felt so much better for it. I didn't feel like death warmed up when I went over that finish line.

Nick: Yeah, so let's go back to the half Ironman because we haven't talked since then. That was about what, six, seven weeks ago?

Kris Gethin: Yeah, about seven, eight weeks ago.

Nick: You did that, you survived it, but was it an eye opener for you, just being out there and being in that race setting like that?

Kris Gethin: Yeah, I'm very good at visualization. I'd visualized a lot leading up to that, and the same with this event. I wasn't caught off-guard with any surprises as such, however, I know that I did

push it a little bit harder than what I should have because I ended up walking quite a bit during the run. I got a respectable time, I got six hours and 19, which I was very happy about, but I pushed it in order to get that. I suffered after. This time I didn't feel like I suffered even though I did double the amount. After the events or during the events, I felt ... I hydrated very well, I took in probably more than enough nutrition. The only thing that really hurt after was my flexors and my ass from that solid saddle for 112 miles.

Nick: That's what kept me from even considering.

Heather: Yeah, that's what the guys-

Kris Gethin: I tell you what, I've tried so many saddles. I've done speed-dating with saddles. No matter how many I try, I just cannot find one that's comfortable for my big fat ass.

Nick: Have you tried the full-on, like fat boy seat, the big gel ones-

Kris Gethin: With the suspension and everything, no I haven't tried that.

Heather: That might be it. That might be the winner right there.

Nick: That's what I put, I have this bike, a fairly slim little bike but I put the big old seat on it.

Heather: Big saddle on it. That saddle soreness, that'll get you.

Kris Gethin: I just figured, if this event is conditioning my resolve this will condition my ass.

Nick: From the ass up, yeah.

Heather: Yeah, the guys that we had filming you throughout this entire adventure, they said that you seem like you were better after the full Ironman than you were after the half. That they saw that in you as well. I was shocked when Nick told me that you completed it in 15 hours, because I get that, I thought for sure he tried to do it in under 10 or something ridiculous.

Kris Gethin: I don't think the pro got it underneath 10. This is what a lot of people don't understand about endurance events such as Ironman, is that it takes years and years, and years to build up the fitness in order to bring in those times. Much like it, you're not standing on a bodybuilding stage such as the Olympia until you've put in at least 10 years. At least 10 years of consistent, hard work. It's the same, exactly the same in Ironman. These guys have built up fitness over many, many years in order to get that time and their efficiency with it. Since then, I've had people commenting, "Hey I'm going to do an Ironman next year, I think I could win my age category." I have to say, look it's great to be optimistic but you got to be realistic as well. Number one, if you're a little bit bigger, forget it. Yeah you can do it, but you're not going to be winning any. You're not breaking any records.

Nick: Victory is just maybe the wrong goal.

Kris Gethin: It definitely is. It's the hustle, it's the journey. That's where it's at-

Heather: We talked about that with bodybuilding.

Kris Gethin: The worst day of my life, probably, is an Ironman because then, it's like, "Now I've got to find another goal." It's the journey, it's getting ready for the event as the days that live and you absorb, and you acknowledge.

Nick: Sure, and as Heather points out, we've had a lot of guests who say the same thing about bodybuilding shows, even though some of them are people who've basically never lost. They say, "Yeah, you're not doing it for the victory." You're actually really doing it, if you want to do it, for the prep, for the experience, for the test.

Heather: If you love it.

Kris Gethin: Exactly.

Heather: Some people go out wanting to win, and I think those are the same people who if they go into an Ironman wanting to win and don't win, they hate it. If you really love and appreciate the journey, then-

Nick: Even if they do win, they'll be depressed afterward-

Heather: Yeah, exactly.

Nick: Because this is it.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, exactly. I found that through bodybuilding. I'd always go into an abyss of depression after an event. When I won it was no different. It was no different, so that's why it very important just to focus on the journey and I think with age now, you can appreciate that a little bit more. This is something that you can possibly do when you're in your 60s. There's a few people that I've spoken to that have, that they could've gone pro but they haven't. I've asked them why and they said, "Because I don't want the pressure, I want this to be something that I always enjoy, and be a hobby, and something that I can do into my twilight years."

Nick: Sure. We have had some Instagram fitness celebrities on who, they wouldn't dream of competing. They talk ... that competing's for crazy people. I can just train and be an inspiration to everybody, why would I put myself through that if I could do this for ever, basically. That's opened up a whole other landscape.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, for bodybuilding, for sure. If you look at endurance sports, though, it's ... Other than CrossFit, that's a hybrid sport. They have no following, zero, and that's always ... I've really had to scratch my head over that, because I'm thinking, "Wow, these are people that I really look up to," they're on the Olympics, they're household names, like possibly in the UK like the Brownlee brothers. However they have a terrible following. I've asked a couple of people about that and they said, "Well, look, I see people in the gym and in between sets, they're taking their selfies and doing their videos. We ain't doing that when we're out on the bike." Chances are our sport is quite expensive, which it is, and the people that participate in it, they've looked at statistics, their average income is \$138,000 for the people who participate. They're successful business people, or whatever.

Nick: Doctors and lawyers out there.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, so they're not messing around on Instagram, they're not taking selfies. They're

not putting out their information they're training. They're certainly not following any other athletes. They're doing it for themselves. They're doing it for their own satisfaction.

Nick: You mentioned bodybuilders and bodybuilder-style training. Your training did take a shift at the half Ironman point, it seems like. The back and bis, a lot of the super sets and things seemed like they went by the wayside a little bit, and you toned it back.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, so the reason being is, this is why I do these video trainers, I don't just instruct people and put people through it, is because I have to experience it myself in order to better navigate it, and then translate it to the viewers so they can apply it themselves. Learn by my mistakes. I quickly realized I came into this as you know, when I came onto the show, "I'm going to build muscle, I'm going to get fitter, lose fat." That wasn't happening leading up to the half. It was frustrating, because whatever my mind could, I could apply to I was able to achieve it physically. This time it wasn't happening.

I quickly realized that I was just putting in too much volume within my workouts because the volume within my disciplines, my cardio especially on the weekends, was just tapping into my muscle stores, my amino acids way too much. So then I pulled back the volume of my training, focused a little bit more on the compound movements, more rest in between sets, less repetitions. Put myself just purely in anabolic states within the gym. That really helped compensate, and there was a complete shift in my physique.

Nick: Really. What did that do to make that shift, what did it result in?

Kris Gethin: I had my lab results done at the beginning and at the end. I don't know if I should disclose it right now. Should people have to ... I think people should view-

Heather: I think we should have to look at it to-

Kris Gethin: They'll have to watch the [video series](#)-

Nick: We'll find it.

Kris Gethin: Okay, but I'll let you know right now that there was a significant gain in muscle that I was very, very happy with. My body fat came down, which was expected. It just goes to show that I could create that shift of increasing muscle mass. I'll give this away. My [VO2 Max](#) went from 44, which is considered standard or good for my age group, and it shot up to 56, I think it was 56. 52, sorry, 52. 44 to 52, which is considered superior for my age group. A lot of that is dependent on genetics. I was very, very, happy that I was able to create that shift in such a short time period.

Nick: You weren't doing a lot of VO2 max protocol style stuff, though. There's some intervals in your program, I know, because I looked at this program every single week. You're not doing tons of VO2 max work. What do you attribute that to?

Kris Gethin: I think-

Nick: Does the gym help that do you think?

Kris Gethin: The gym definitely helps, because I am a high volume trainer, especially on legs and

stuff like that. I don't take that much rest in between sets. There was during the week, I was hitting a little bit more resistance, like if I was on the Wattbike. If I was out on a bike, I'd push it pretty hard in those shorter sessions. On the weekends, that's when I was just, like I said, getting comfortable being uncomfortable, and just working my aerobic capacity by pacing myself, and just going out there for long distances, and using that as a recovery ride or run. When I was, thanks to you, I found a lot of trails-

Nick: It's a whole different world out there, man.

Kris Gethin: I loved it. Absolutely loved it.

Nick: It's the best.

Kris Gethin: It helped my knees, it helped my hips. It made the run that much harder. I was hitting a lot of elevation, a lot of hills out there and it made it very difficult with my body weight, putting out that much more extra wattage. So that definitely helped with my cardiovascular function, because then when I would go ... I was in New York a couple of weeks ago, I'm running around Central Park, I'm like, "Wow, I'm running at a much faster pace now, and it's so much easier." It's like going from mountain biking to biking. You're just going to find the road so much easier.

Nick: Right, and the trail you have to pay such close attention, too.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, I like that.

Heather: Yeah, you can't really zone out.

Kris Gethin: I like that because then you're that much more aware. You notice that because you're more mentally exhausted when you come back, because you've had to concentrate the whole time, that you're not going to twist an ankle or whatever. Where you do zone out when you're on the road. It isn't as tiring.

Heather: Yeah, I used to do a lot of trail running and it was much more fun. I'd go out without music just because you can get lost just on the trail and-

Nick: There's people, there have been studies into it that say that you actually have a different response running in natural surroundings than you do in the city, too. You're more efficient, and it's better quality training generally-

Kris Gethin: Yeah, because you are more aware of yourself, and I've said that with the Kenyans, that's why they're so good. They don't go out with their headphones. They're not amongst the hustle bustle of people, city, that environment. They're focusing on the sound of their feet. Making as minimal amount of noise as possible, so they have that-

Nick: Steps and breathing, that's all they can hear.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, you got it.

Nick: You also then would go crush arms on Monday. That's one thing that I also ... All of the sudden, it's like everything else went back. You still destroyed arms every Monday. Was that still

like, "I got to do this, if I'm going to be me I still have to leave my week this way."

Kris Gethin: Yeah, exactly, because I know that I've been out on a long ride, or long run on a Monday, I'm going to hit small body part on that following day. Arms, biceps, triceps, I haven't hit my upper body and those limbs. It seems like the perfect way to start the week. Then I'd hit legs on a Tuesday once they've loosened up and recovered a little.

Nick: Okay, so let's talk about the days leading up to the race. You were still deadlifting five plates with Alex Viotta a week before, I saw on Instagram. You weren't tapering per se like somebody who's done ... When you think of a taper before a race. It was a Gethin-style taper.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, well I was asked to taper about three weeks before, as most triathletes do. I figured, I don't really have that time to do so. A lot of these triathletes have been doing this for a long time. They can afford to taper for three weeks. I'm not that highly tuned machine as yet. I know that I can probably recover more efficiently than these people, because I'm doing the massage, I'm doing the cryotherapy, I'm taking high levels of glutamine, a lot of protein, the foam rolling or whatever it may be. I can focus on my recovery and get a little bit more aggressive with my recovery than those people. I don't have that time on my side, so I wanted to lead into the event a little bit more and work a little bit more on my fitness. I think it was three weeks before I went up to Stanley, I did my 2.4 mile swim, and then the following day I went and did an 86-mile bike ride and went over the Galena Summit twice, which was a lot of elevation.

Nick: Wow.

Kris Gethin: Then I followed that with a 12-mile trial run the following day. That definitely wasn't a taper. Then I went out on a threshold ride with Tritan, a local club here which destroyed me. We covered 23 miles in, it was just over an hour. That was with traffic lights.

Heather: Wow.

Kris Gethin: That pushed it hard. We continued that when I went to Texas for GASP and got some pretty badass workouts there. As soon as my last workout was with Alex hitting back. I went aggressive with the recovery then, with the massage, did cryotherapy, did oxygen therapy. Had a little bit of a relaxation and made sure that we got up to Coeur d'Alene, where the event was held, early, and I purposely located this bed and breakfast that was six miles out of town, away from the noise, where I could start using a lot of visualization.

Don't ask me how I come up with this number, but I believe around 77 percent of the recovery and lowering your cortisol levels comes from de-stressing the mind. Your mind plays a huge roll, whether it's you thinking that you'll get in shape or you won't get in shape. Thinking that you'll recover or won't recover. Thinking if you'll actually finish the event or not finish the event. A lot of visualization comes into it for me then. I can only do that without the noise and hustle and bustle. Be close to myself with thoughts without any people around.

Nick: Does that mean you slept like a baby the night before?

Kris Gethin: Not really.

Nick: That's tough.

Kris Gethin: What time do I go to bed, around 9 o'clock, or something, 8 o'clock? 8 o'clock, 8 o'clock.

Nick: 8 o'clock, okay that's pretty good.

Kris Gethin: I was up about 2:30 or something in the morning. Yeah, not bad.

Nick: As you get to the starting line, there's all these people there. I saw hundreds and hundreds of people. Even in the full Ironman, which is mind blowing to me. The heart pounding, or are you just ready?

Kris Gethin: I'm relaxed, very relaxed. It's calming then, because I've visualized everything. I've visualized me going, having blisters. Having a puncher, getting kicked in the face in the swim. Everything so I know nothing's going to be a surprise. I don't want to sound arrogant, but I'm certain that I'm going to finish. That was my goal. The only thing that happened was that someone punched the goggles off my head at one point, but I was able to catch them and put them back on. That was the only surprise.

My parents were there, they came up as well and my father had been with me for many, many years when I was racing motocross. Having him there, I don't know why it's just very relaxing and comforting, because he knows mentally what I go through. This time I interacted a little bit more. Before I'd be very much a recluse. I'm much better with it now, I'm more sociable with it, and I find it's much bigger than me now. Before it was all about me. Now it isn't, it's about the charity that I'm doing this for, it's about the people that are watching this and hopefully going to inspire to become a hybrid athlete. So when you think about things like that, it makes it so much easier. If you've got any negative voices, they quickly get drowned out by these others.

Nick: Yeah, now, oh go ahead.

Heather: I was going to say, so you talk about hybrid athlete, and one question I've been wanting to ask this whole time, do you think that this is something that you'll do again?

Kris Gethin: For sure. I was talking to Sunshine earlier that I'm already thinking about doing one in Arizona. I'm already looking at that. I've been looking at that one, Kentucky, Florida, because I've spoken to a lot of people that ... I spoke to somebody on the weekend, that have done eight different events, and they said Coeur d'Alene is by far the hardest. That bike route is just a killer. I use an extra six watts of power per kilo of body weight, on as little as a two percent gradient. It's very inefficient for someone my weight and that amount of muscle tissue. I want to find something a little bit flatter next time. I'm looking at doing something different somewhere else. I'll always be a hybrid athlete now.

Nick: It's considered a trail race, though, those trail race up in the mountains. There's no ass blisters, that's the nice thing.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, I'm definitely out for that. I was somewhere yesterday and saw a half marathon post and I snapped a picture and I thought, "Remember that, it's next month somewhere." You'll have to keep me informed where and when they are. Are you talking longer than a marathon, like an ultramarathon?

Nick: No, no, no.

Heather: No.

Nick: There are some, in September. I don't know when this is going to come out exactly. There's a beautiful one up north at McCall. There's a 22-mile version and then there's the 100-mile version. You can choose one or the other.

Kris Gethin: A 22 wouldn't be an ultramarathon.

Nick: Nope.

Heather: No.

Nick: No. There are ultramarathons, there are a few 50Ks in Idaho where we live, but there are also a lot of that 10-to-20 range, which is so nice because you don't have to prepare for it for months, you can prepare for it for weeks. At the end of it, you feel like you've accomplished something but you feel good. You don't feel completely destroyed.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, I'm down for something like that. I got another question for you, then. If you do a race that's like 30 miles, do they exist?

Heather: Yeah, I think they do-

Nick: Yeah, I mean, 50K is about 35 miles.

Heather: I know 50 miles exist.

Kris Gethin: Oh, Ks, we're talking Ks.

Nick: Yeah, so there are 30Ks, there's some 12Ks. There's everything, when it comes to trails they don't line up like marathons do. Marathons, half marathons, those things happen on streets because they're easy to measure. If you're saying, "Hey we're going to go from this natural starting point to the top of the mountain and back," they'll call it maybe a 30K but it's actually more like 22 miles or something. The trails just refuse to be categorized. That's the fun of it. The 50K scene is, it's in tents. Those guys, those ultramarathoners have a little bit more of a following than triathletes, I feel like, because-

Kris Gethin: No, I don't think that.

Nick: They run in the Alps, they have these beautiful Instagram accounts. They're celebrities in the running world sometimes, yeah.

Kris Gethin: Oh really? I need to look some of them up because I know Nicodemus down in San Diego, he finished the Berkeley. I think he became the 13th person to finish the Berkeley. Only 14 people have ever finished it.

Nick: Wow.

Kris Gethin: He's got such a small following.

Nick: Guys like Kilian Jornet and Anton Krupika, they're these incredible running celebrities. There's a handful of them that are able to do it as a living, but they're unreal. Those guys, they run up the Matterhorn, they run up the Grand Teton, and things like that.

Heather: Then was it that guy that ran up Everest?

Nick: Yeah, that's-

Heather: We were talking about that when-

Nick: That's Kilian Jornet.

Heather: You went on your run up hill a few weeks ago, we were talking about that. What's he going to do-

Nick: Right, up the mountain in California.

Heather: What's he going to do next?

Nick: I thought you were going to die on that one!

Heather: This guy actually did run up Everest and it took him what, 23 hours, 24?

Kris Gethin: Wow.

Heather: Yeah, and he did it with-

Kris Gethin: Insane.

Heather: With oxygen?

Nick: I believe it was without. I wouldn't, I'm not entirely sure.

Heather: It was without. Now, some guys do it with oxygen, and they do it in 16 hours or something ridiculous. Get that glow in his eyes now he's got a whole-

Nick: There's a whole world of weirdness out there. You ran up that mountain in California, which is one of the toughest day hikes, even, in the United States. People don't run that thing. You ran that.

Kris Gethin: It was a very slow run. It was a very slow run. Yeah, it was very dark by the time we were coming back down. We were using our phones and Alex's headlamp to see where we were going. What was interesting about that is Alex had suffered from, have you heard of rhabdo?

Nick: Sure, sure.

Kris Gethin: He'd suffered from that only five days before because he ran down the Grand Canyon,

because he was relocating over to San Diego. He ran down there.

Nick: He ran to his new home.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, well, along the way he stopped at the Grand Canyon, figured, "I'll run to the bottom." He'd forgotten his electrolytes.

Heather: Oh, dear.

Kris Gethin: He had water, but he figured, "I'll be okay," and he got down in very good time, but by the time he got down there it was around mid-day. Extremely hot. He started having major cramps on the way back up. Threw up, basically collapsed. Threw up on himself several times, and the only thing that got him out of it was he started covering himself in water and he sucked out the salt from his t-shirt that he had sweated through.

Nick: Wow.

Kris Gethin: He just laid there for about 45 minutes. Got himself back up, and then that was it. Then he decided to do this run with us just some days later. On the way back down he said he didn't feel good at all. We took our time on the way back down, and the next day, we were supposed to go for a swim. I went for a swim, he went to hospital. They found out then that he'd suffered from rhabdo.

Heather: Oh dear, yeah that's not something you want to mess around.

Nick: That's the fourth event in the triathlon is the hospital.

Heather: Yeah, no the downhill will kill you. If there's an art to trail running it's figuring out how to fall gracefully downhill, because it's more of a controlled fall than an actual run. If you can get that, then trail running is-

Kris Gethin: I kind of trot. I trot down.

Nick: How did your in-race nutrition and supplementation hold up? I know some people when they get in these events, they find, "Oh, my God, my stomach's rebelling, I can't eat what I feel like I should eat. I can't keep things down or it doesn't feel good."

Kris Gethin: I took in everything that I'd practiced.

Nick: 20 pounds of food I saw on Instagram you had with you.

Kris Gethin: It was a lot of food and fluid. It's a lot of food and fluid all day.

Nick: Mule out there.

Kris Gethin: I weighed everything up, and I was holding the bags when we were carrying them down to the transition and the aid station. They were heavy. I'm like, "Oh, it's just food and drink."

Like I've heard of one case of somebody losing 27 pounds in a day on one of those things. I needed to ensure, and I did err on the caution of taking in too much. Sunshine makes these amazing energy

balls that are made of dates. I have my Re-Kaged protein powder in there. I have oats, there's honey, seeds, nuts, and turmeric, ginger. I'm pretty good, aren't I?

Nick: When are you going to start selling these things?

Kris Gethin: That's what I told her. Get them in Tritan.

Nick: Sunshine's energy balls.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, there you go. So, I had 12 of those things. I had an extra bag put onto my bike as well. I was eating them throughout the ride. Beforehand, I had 12- to 15 hundred calories when I woke up at breakfast, mainly in the form of oats, egg whites, peanut butter, nuts, fruits, honey.

Nick: A little bit of fat in there, too.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, have to at that point. Then before the swim, just before, I had a banana, and then they had two loops of the swim where you actually had to come out onto the beach just a little bit, and run back in. I had a gel underneath my sleeve, and I knocked that back, which I'm glad I did, because at the end of the swim I was hungry, very hungry.

Nick: Swimming has been a challenge for you, too. I remember the first time you got in the pool in one of the videos and you said, "Oh, my God, I sink like a stone."

Heather: Yeah, that's what I was curious about.

Nick: It surprised you. Ultimately did that feel comfortable out there? Do you feel like you have embraced the water?

Kris Gethin: Yeah, I can swim a couple of miles now, obviously, 2.4 miles quite easily. I'm not efficient. I'm definitely not efficient. Yeah, my weight is a problem, or my muscle density I should say, not my weight. If I was fat, it would be a lot easier.

Heather: It's a lot easier to float then.

Nick: Triathletes and endurance athletes are, they have more fat on their body than people realize, that their body composition is not always the most muscular just because their bodies are trained to be so efficient. They hold onto fat reserves. It makes them great at swimming.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, and some of them are very tall, which makes them very hydrodynamic in the water as well. That's something that I'm definitely going to be working on now. I've just been to the YMCA and I've just signed up for their masters swimming class. I really need somebody to push me and help me with my technique there more than anything. Fitness I feel is there. Then with the nutrition, I've made sure when I got out of the swim, I had a drink ready in my transition bag, because I didn't want to just drink everything that I had on the bike. I wanted to keep that, so I knocked back a bottle there of 24 ounces. Then I just started hydrating for about 10 minutes, and then I started eating on the bike. I was knocking in about 500 calories per hour, and about-

Nick: That's a decent clip.

Kris Gethin: Yeah. I was expecting to have about 32 ounces of water per hour, but I had around 24 instead. I didn't feel like I needed it. I think I'm instinctive, where to I know what my body needs now. Then when I came to the run, that's where I had a little bit of trouble, because I did have some solid foods packed with me, but I think that I'd front loaded that well on the bike, I just didn't need as much food. I just had a couple of things off the aid stations, oranges, some bananas. I actually ran with a CamelBak. Not many people do that, but I'm going through so much fluid that I felt that I needed to.

I had my supplements in there, and that's one thing that I feel that why I wasn't so sore after the event. I supplemented throughout the entire duration of the race, all the time, so I felt like I was beginning my recovery process whilst doing the race. The typical bodybuilding supplements, the glutamine, the BCAAs, the electrolytes, my Hydra-Charge. Obviously, I had my Re-Caged, the protein isolate basically, during the ride. I had it during the run as well. Something light, something easy to digest. I think bodybuilding supplements should have their way in endurance supplements if they're light enough.

Nick: It's interesting, though-

Heather: That's a good crossover.

Nick: Endurance athletes love their supplements but they often don't take bodybuilding supplements. You've been taking these for a long time. Which of them do you feel like really made all the difference?

Kris Gethin: As weird as it sounds, the branch chain amino acids I felt made the biggest difference. I felt a bigger difference with the BCAAs during this activity than bodybuilding, funnily enough. I just felt that I was able to recover through my workouts, but I didn't feel like I had the lactic acid build up at all, as much during these sessions compared to when I wasn't taking the BCAAs. Sometimes when I travel, I'm like, "Oh, I'll take my essentials, my glutamine, my Hydro-Charge protein or whatever. BCAAs, yeah, I won't worry about my protein synthesis, it can stay here." I noticed the difference and I was surprised. BCAAs become quite the dark horse.

Nick: I think that's interesting. I remember when I was working on a piece with Krissy Kendall when she was here, about supplements for endurance athletes. We were going over the science and I remember thinking, just like it came to me, "Bodybuilders don't need these nearly as much as endurance athletes do."

Heather: Right, yeah.

Nick: Bodybuilders already eat so much damn protein, but endurance athletes probably could benefit more from them. When I was doing a race up in the mountains, I had this little bottle of Kaged Muscle BCAA pills that I was chewing, because my mouth was so damn dry. They tasted terrible, of course.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, don't chew them.

Nick: Yeah, well yeah, I would say do not chew them. It made a huge difference just in terms of how I subjectively felt during the race. Do I feel like I can continue going, or do I feel like I'm getting overwhelmed by fatigue? I was amazed. Maybe it's all placebo, but it did not feel like placebo, it felt like it was a serious difference.

Heather: No, I'd agree with you on that. I started out as a distance runner, and then I did some bodybuilding, and there was a period in there where I was still a crossover. I knew about supplements but I was still going on long runs. I would agree, that I had a much better recovery from taking supplements than I did when I was a full endurance athlete running marathons. I think there's-

Kris Gethin: There's no doubt about it. There's no way I could participate in bodybuilding, training the way that I do and training to be an Ironman or triathlete without supplementation. It's impossible. I would not recover. If I recover by 90 percent I'm only going to optimize my performance by 90 percent. I need 100 percent every time, so after I optimize the supplementation or to recover.

Heather: That's what I love that you talk about in your Kaged Muscle, about your supplements is that, yes it might only be five percent, but if you can optimize that five percent, why wouldn't you?

Kris Gethin: Yeah, because sometimes of course, people think I'm biased towards supplementation, or you're just trying to sell something. I would always go back to, yeah the supplements are only three to five percent if you are 100 percent with your recovery, your training, your nutrition but why wouldn't you want to take that three to five percent because-

Heather: It's easy, it's right there to take.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, exactly, because you know what? I'm getting one more rep out than you. I'm going to finish a couple of seconds faster than you every day, and that adds up.

Nick: During the race, were you talking to other athletes out there, you turning some heads, or is it a pretty solitary experience because I know they can run the gamut.

Kris Gethin: It was more solitary this time in comparison to the half, because it was less people participating. I think there was more serious athletes in this one. Yeah, there was a few people, some people would talk to me, say, "Hey you look like a powerlifter. Hey can we draft behind your calves." That's what people said. Somebody even shouted, a spectator, "Hey, thunder thighs, but in a good way." I had a lot of comments because I obviously look very different out there to everybody else, but they were all very supportive. The comradery in the events I think is absolutely awesome between the participants and the spectators. Every now and again there's a guy called Miguel, and there's several others, but this guy called Miguel, we were with each other the whole ride, and the whole run. Except I did beat him in the run. The last loop I felt, "Well, I feel good so I guess I could pick it up a little bit."

Nick: Let's do it.

Kris Gethin: That's what I did, so I left him then.

Nick: I noticed that when I was watching, I thought, "Oh my God, he has a lot left," and then all of the sudden it was over very quickly on the results.

Kris Gethin: It was good, and that's what I wanted. I wanted to feel good at the end, that I could do that. I didn't want to be dragging my ass over. I would generally pass him on the downhills. He would pass me on the uphills, because the uphills are really, really bad for me. We got talking to each

other, and he had done several Ironman events and this was his second time doing Coeur d'Alene. We got chatting and it's good to get a little bit of that distraction. The day goes so much quicker then.

Nick: Helps you pace yourself, too.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, for sure.

Nick: If you got to talk, you can't be throwing up while you talk. So, you had a great piece come out on the site recently called "[What Every Bodybuilder Needs to Know About Running](#)." Had some solid tips but at the end of all this are there any other tips that ... Two or three things where you think, somebody who wants to be a hybrid athlete, this is what you really need to keep in mind.

Kris Gethin: I want everybody to keep in mind that it's less superficial. A lot of people obviously want to focus on their pecs and their biceps and their delts. Is it going to be that muscle that's going to allow you to kiss your kids in the morning? Is that going to allow you to see some amazing views that we have here in Idaho, like the Sawtooths? Is that going to allow you to have an experience at your workplace, another birthday, or whatever. It's not, it's going to be your heart that allows you to do that every single year, to have this experience. However, we don't see that muscle, so people tend to neglect it, and I hate that people put it at the bottom of their pecking order over their pecs, pardon that pun.

Nick: The pec order.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, the pec order. That's something that I really want to get through to people's heads, because you can drastically improve your health markers. My joints feel amazing now, would you believe, you'd think that they'd be sore after the running, but because of the trail running I believe, they're great. My health markers have drastically improved. I've increased muscle mass, I've decreased body fat, my VO2 max is up, my lactic threshold is better. Why wouldn't you want to participate in both? It doesn't have to be extreme. Maybe you just want to do an event such as a Spartan, such as a half marathon. Maybe you don't, but go out there and experience the outdoors instead of the numbers on a treadmill. You can't really be one with your thoughts at that point. You're not going to acknowledge yourself, you're not going to be aware.

I think a lot of people are really missing out on that. Only because I've experienced it, that I feel enlightened by it. I really want to try to, not enforce, inspire others to do it. I'm getting so many tags now, and pictures from people that are doing it. I was on the Fox Morning Show network on Friday. When I went there eight weeks ago just before the half, they asked me on. There's a gentleman there called Josh, who works there. He was one of the guys that got me on with his producer, [inaudible 00:38:31], and he was following the video series and he said, "I'm going to do a triathlon." Since then he had done three. The day before my Ironman, he was doing his fourth. He ended up winning that one in his age category.

Nick: Wow.

Kris Gethin: That's what I absolutely love now. I love to see that more than people taking a selfie in the gym. I love seeing people actually doing both now and experiencing-

Nick: Yeah, there is room for both. It's not an either/or.

Kris Gethin: Yeah, I'm not saying choose one or the other. I just want bodybuilders to understand that they can experience so much more, and be a bodybuilder. Because I tell you what, there's nothing ... I remember this clearly, doing the run, thinking, "Man, this is awesome. I can run a whole marathon being nearly 220 pounds, as a bodybuilder. How awesome is that?" Six months ago, forget it. Couldn't even do a mile. It felt awesome to actually be able to do that, and there's no way I want to let that go. Can you imagine? It's like building up a physique that you wanted and now you just let it go. You just can't do it.

Nick: It's been a great journey and a great story that we've certainly enjoyed-

Heather: It's definitely-

Nick: I know a lot of people have enjoyed watching. The Man of Iron series will continue all the way through the end of it. I don't know, I'm not sure quite when it's going to come out. We'll time it so that maybe a couple of weeks before the last episode.

Kris Gethin: The Ironman.

Heather: Do a little excerpt.

Kris Gethin: I'd say we're probably about six episodes away, yeah.

Heather Eastman: Yeah, we're pretty close.

Nick: Yeah, well thank you so much for coming and talking with us, it's been a great experience.

Kris Gethin: Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Nick Collias: He'll always be here on Bodybuilding.com, this guy's not going anywhere.

Kris Gethin: I'll be back whenever you want me.



[WHAT EVERY BODYBUILDER NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT RUNNING](#)

Kris Gethin has fundamentally changed his approach to cardio in recent months, but if you think he's lost his gains as well, you're sorely mistaken. Here's what he says every lifter should learn!