

Team Bright Side
2023 Race Week Guide

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My friends ...

It's the most important week of your life ever. Screw your family and friends, job, education and pets, for **THIS EVENT IS BIGGER**: Chicago Triathlon 2023. I hope your mojo is bubbling and your enthusiasm is building because **THIS** is what you've been training for since May. Nay nay, you goober! **TRAINING FOR THIS MOMENT YOUR ENTIRE LIFE!**

Now, your training is **DONE**. **There is no more time to build muscle or endurance for race day**. However, there is time for **rest, recovery**, and keeping your muscles all **gooey and supple** so that the best version of your athlete self is ready to kick ass on Sunday. Or Saturday, if you're nasty.

That doesn't mean "do nothing." Nay nay, you goober! There is still a week that is **CHOCK FULL** of events! Our *workouts* may be ramping down, but the week is ramping up!

This is not the official *Chicago Triathlon Athlete Guide*. [That can be found here](#). This guide is our suggested itinerary for the week. It's loaded with tips, advice, race planning strategies and other goodies specifically on the Bright Side. So yes, please read your official athlete guide as well. **Follow my plan to succeed, you goober!**

I do hope you're as ready as I am for you to do this thang. It's been such an honor to be a part of your lives for the last few months. And this is just the beginning.

But in all seriousness... don't fuck it up.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nic Ruley', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the name.

Nic Ruley
Head Coach, Team Bright Side

Race Week Schedule

Monday, August 21st:

Course Preview 6 PM, Queen's Landing

We'll meet as a group for a super casual shakeout shuffle starting at Queen's Landing and taking in swim start, turn, finish, Bright Side Tent location, the run from swim exit to transition, transition, and bike start/finish. Followed by our annual photo at "Honorary Triathlon Way." Seriously. It's a real place. You'll be "running" at my pace, so all paces are welcome! It's SUPER informative, y'all!

Race Planning (On Your Own)

Follow [this link](#) and fill in your data so we can track you on the course. Use information from the [mock tri](#), the [aquathlons](#), and your workouts to set realistic expectations. Feel free to do better, but this is so we can track you.

Read your Athlete Guide

This guide and the [official Chicago Triathlon Athlete Guide](#). Ask the coach any last-minute questions that you have.

Tuesday, August 22nd:

Weak Sport (On Your Own)

Today, take 40 minutes to practice the sport you feel the weakest at. Swim or bike. If you're running, only do it for 30 minutes. Hell, you can even practice transitions for 30 minutes. You choose, keep it light, and work on technique.

Natasha P. will be on her bike in a parking lot working on starts and turns.

Wednesday, August 23rd:

Aquathlon (Group Workout) 6 PM, Ohio Street Beach

All y'all are swimming 1/2 mile and running a 5k. Beach start, jaunty run. If you don't know the pace for race planning, this is a great time to get some numbers.

Thursday, August 24th:

Brick Workout (On Your Own)

Ride for 30 minutes at an aerobic pace or 6/10 RPE. Throw a couple of 20-second sprint sets in there to activate your fast-twitch muscles and wake 'em up. Then hop off for an easy 15-minute jog. EASY and loose like a spruce moose.

Friday, August 25th:

Inspiration Dinner 6:00 PM, The Ivy Room

Ah yeah! This is it!! Come carb load and hear some pretty swell speeches! Will I say "fuck"? Come and find out! [Spoiler Alert: I won't.] You do you, but in my heart, this is mandatory.

Best Sleep

Tonight is the night that I need you to get your very best sleep of the week. We'll be done with the inspiration dinner at a super reasonable hour so you can pop a melatonin by 8 PM and drift into a deep and wonderful slumber. Melatonin is not required. You can also take a Xanax or Ambien. If you choose those, however, share them with your coach. I see you, Tiger Woods.

Limit Fiber

After the Inspiration Dinner, begin to limit your fiber intake until after the race. I'm not saying NO roughage, but the less roughage, the better. For reasons. Poop reasons.

Saturday, August 26th:

Breakfast

Eat a normal breakfast when you wake up. Try not to upset your system by making any major changes. Don't try anything new. If you don't eat breakfast usually, have peanut butter and a toasted English Muffin. If you drink coffee normally, drink it today.

Volunteer at Kids Tri/SuperSprint 6:00 AM, Foster Ave. Beach

Yes, this is a big big big rest day. Sure. But the kids race is so fucking cute that you will die if you watch it. I still need volunteers! I need volunteers in transition, volunteers selling coffee, volunteers with cameras! COULD THIS BE YOU!! If you're a size SM, XL, or 2XL, you'll even get a free t-shirt!

Packet Pickup (Suggested) 3 PM, Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave.

Packet pickup is mandatory. And you must pick up your packet yourself. Included in the packet pickup is a 30 minute mandatory athlete briefing. I'll be at the "Ask an Official" booth or your mandatory briefing. Feel free to stop by and say hi!

Final Bike Ride (On Your Own)

Get a super quick 20-minute shakeout ride in today. Run through all of your gears, check your brakes, and make sure all is right with your bike. Also, leave your bike in a pretty easy gear before you put it in transition.

Bike Racking (Suggested) 2 PM, Transition, 300 E. Monroe

Rack your bike early and scope out your transition today. It's not required, and you can bring your bike on race day, but it's CHAOS! Racking early ensures a prime spot and a little extra room on race morning. Get it done and limit nervous energy. Make sure your bike is set in an easy gear. Don't leave your helmet or other gear. Just your bike. No need for a bike lock as there is 24-hour security.

Add Salt and Hydrate your Bland Food

So, we're limiting fiber. Today, let's limit spice as well. Keep it bland. Preferably not fried. Add a little extra salt to the food you're eating. Make sure to sip water all throughout the day as well. Not EXTRA hydration, per se, but just keeping on top of it.

I like to set an alarm on my watch and sip water every 20 minutes. Also, today is a great day to head to Whole Foods to pickup a ProK+ Probiotic. It's about \$5. Shake it well and chug the whole little barrel.

Pack Up Your Gear

Lay it all out and pack it all up. Use my packing list that's included.

Sleep as Well As you Can

Sleeping before a race is tough. Tossing and turning is common. Just be very, very patient and compassionate with yourself. If sleeping isn't coming to you, try meditation, reading a book, or taking a long bath. If you must be online or watching TV, make sure it's not race related. Let your mind rest as well.

Race Day Schedule, Olympic Distance Sunday, August 27th:

Breakfast

Wake up early and eat breakfast. Don't eat anything unusual or anything different than you normally would. We want your system to not think anything is up and then we'll spring the race on it. If you drink coffee normally, then drink coffee. If you don't eat breakfast, consider peanut butter on a toasted English Muffin and a banana. Delish.

Olympic Drive/Uber/CTA to Race Site 4 AM

CTA is your best bet. Red Line to Lake. Brown Line to State/Lake. Uber is the second best option. Lakeshore lanes close down around 4 AM, so it can get really tough to navigate downtown. Consider telling your Uber driver to drive through downtown to Monroe and Lakeshore Drive. If you're driving, Millennium Park Garage is a great place to park. Book through SpotHero for the cheapest rates.

Setup Olympic Transition 4:30 AM, Transition

From transition clinics and mock tris, you should feel very comfortable doing this. If you need a refresher, [check out our transition video!](#) Pro tip! Wear headphones and stay focused. Lots of nervous people around you. You don't want that energy. After you set up your transition, scope out the path that you'll run from the swim to your bike. Count landmarks. Jog the path to make sure you can do it right. You're racked right by Bike Out, so that's cool. Warmed up? Head to the Bright Side tent near the swim start.

Olympic Group Photo 5:40 AM, Bright Side Tent

Check-in with our volunteers, grab some coffee, stow your bag, and get that wetsuit on! Bathrooms are there as well. So poop if you can.

Olympic Athlete Start 6:05 AM

Do the thing, you beautiful bastards!! Look for high fives at the Bright Side Tent when you run by!!

Race Day Schedule, Sprint Distance Sunday, August 27th:

Breakfast

Wake up early and eat breakfast. Don't eat anything unusual or anything different than you normally would. We want your system not to think anything is up and then we'll spring the race on it. If you drink coffee normally, then drink coffee. If you don't eat breakfast, consider peanut butter on a toasted English Muffin and a banana. Delish.

Sprint Drive/Uber/CTA to Race Site 6:15 AM

CTA is your best bet. Red Line to Lake. Brown Line to State/Lake. Uber is the second best option. Lakeshore lanes close down around 4 AM, so it can get really tough to navigate downtown. Consider telling your Uber driver to drive through downtown to Monroe and Lakeshore Drive. If you're driving, Millennium Park Garage is a great place to park. Book through SpotHero for the cheapest rates.

Setup Sprint Transition 6:30 AM, Transition

From transition clinics and mock tris, you should feel very comfortable doing this. If you need a refresher, [check out our transition video!](#) Pro tip! Wear headphones and stay focused. Lots of nervous people around you. You don't want that energy. After you set up your transition, scope out the path that you'll run from the swim to your bike. Count landmarks. Jog the path to make sure you can do it right. You're racked right by Bike Out, so that's cool. Warmed up? Head to the Bright Side tent near the swim start.

Sprint Group Photo 8 AM, Bright Side Tent

Check in with a volunteer, grab some nosh, stow your bag, and get that wetsuit on! Bathrooms are there as well. So poop if you can.

Sprint Athlete Start 8:20 AM

Do the thing, you beautiful bastards!!

Race Week Nutrition

Race week should be a typical nutrition week for you, until Friday evening.

Friday at the Inspiration Dinner, you'll be saying goodbye to lots of fiber. So eat your salad and bran flakes then if you need them. Our goal is for everything you eat on Friday night to process through your system by Saturday.

There is a myth when it comes to carb loading. Most people actually replenish their glycogen storages pretty naturally, so doubling your carb intake would just make you feel sluggish and bloated. While I recommend eating a complex carbohydrate with dinner - think pasta - there is no reason to be ridiculous about it. Unless you are **LOOKING** for an excuse to eat a lot of carbs. Then have at it.

Saturday, continue to **limit your fiber** intake. That doesn't mean ZERO fiber, but just not copious amounts of raw broccoli and kale. Also, limit spice. Add a little extra salt to your food to make sure your body is doing right by water. And speaking of water, sip water throughout the day. Like with carbs, don't go crazy, but make sure you're staying on top of your hydration. When I have an important race, I set an alarm on my watch to go off every 20 minutes and take a sip of water when it sounds. It's annoying, but it keeps my race body happy. Also, the day before the race, I like to take a refrigerated, fermented probiotic. I use the BioK+ from Whole Foods. It's about \$5 and keeps my gut so very, very happy on race day.

Sunday morning, **eat a normal breakfast**. We don't want your body to think something crazy is happening. You're already going to be hormonally wonky, so let's not add to your body's stress. If you don't eat breakfast, well, shame on you. Race morning, I need you to eat something, so have some toast or an English Muffin with some peanut butter and a banana. If you drink coffee normally, drink coffee on race morning.

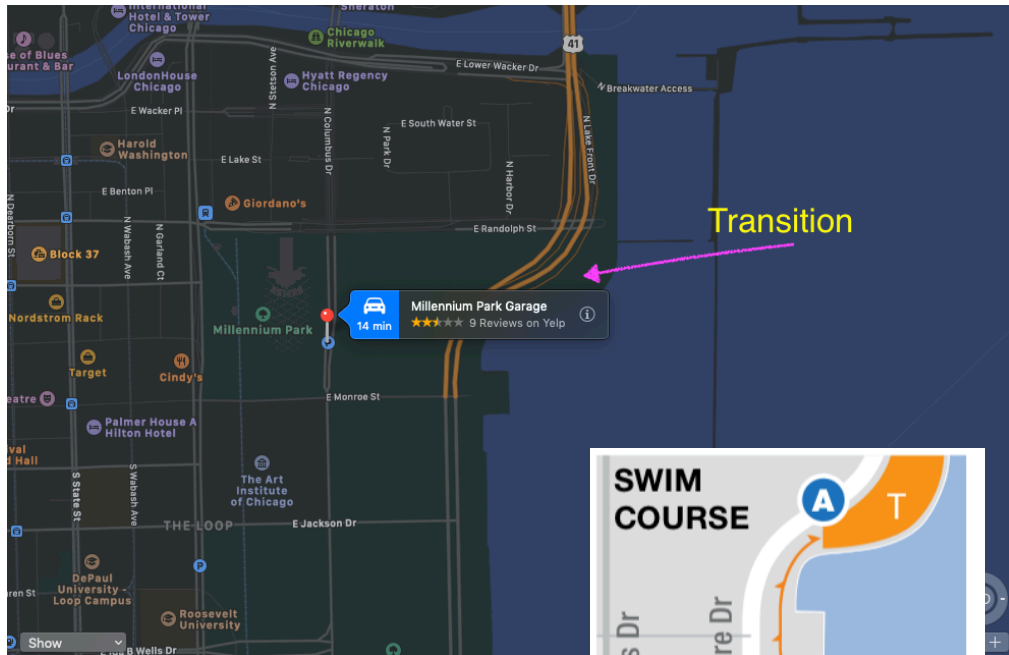
Truth be known, what you really, really, really want to do before your race is poop. Not a lie. We want that system vacated before you get on the course. That way, nerves won't be an issue.

About 20 minutes before you get into the water, have a gel, gu, or shot blocks.

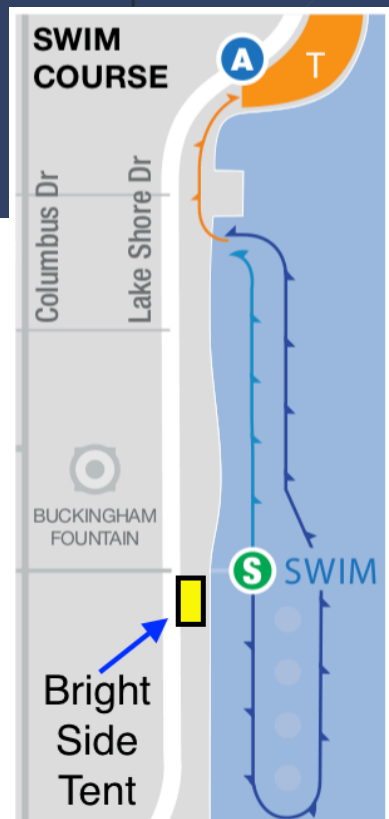
The key components for the week are to not do anything crazy new. Don't start a diet. ***Don't forget to eat.***

Maps

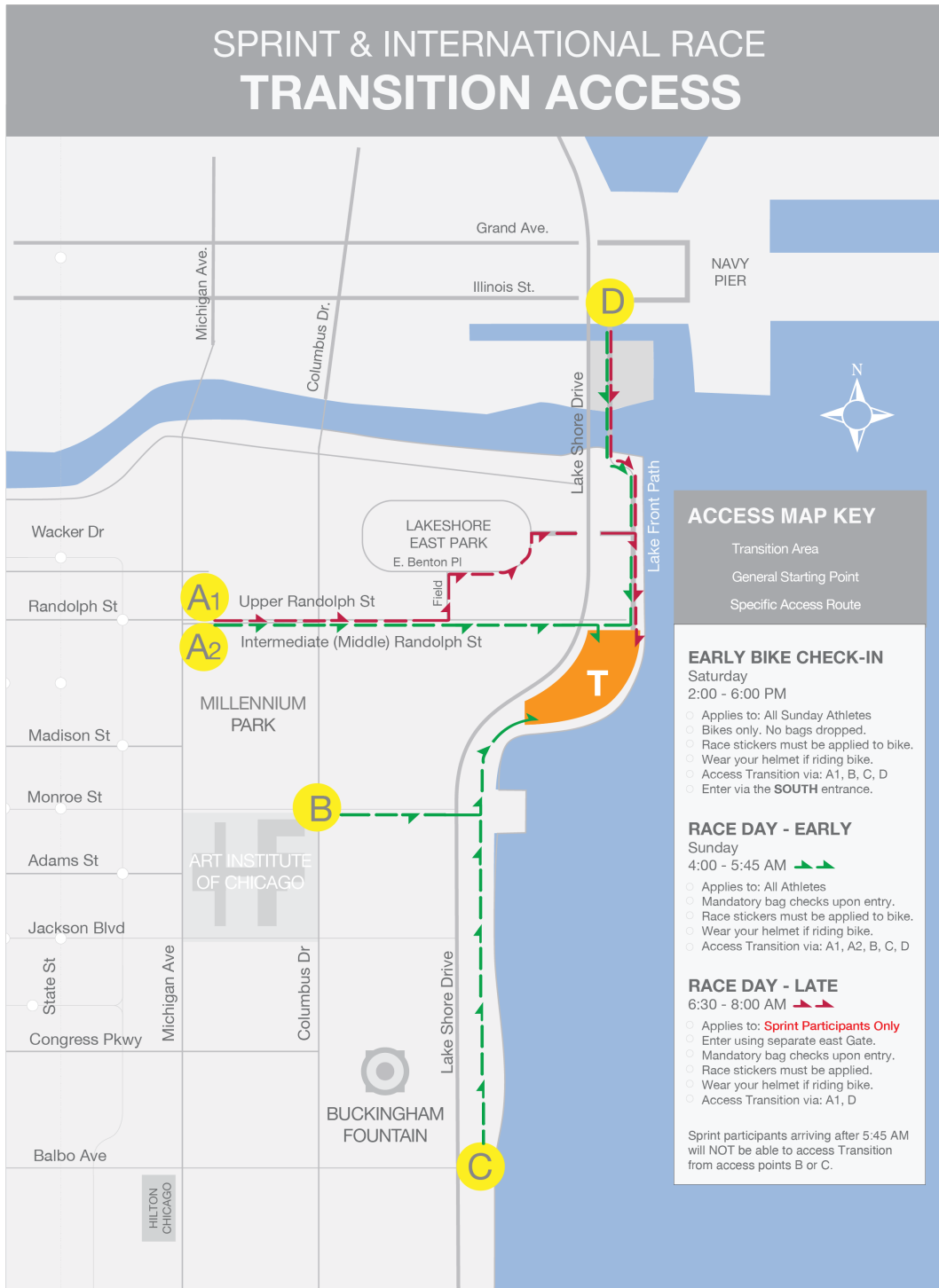
Suggested Parking: Millennium Park Garages. Book on SpotHero for cheapest rates. 5 South Columbus Drive.



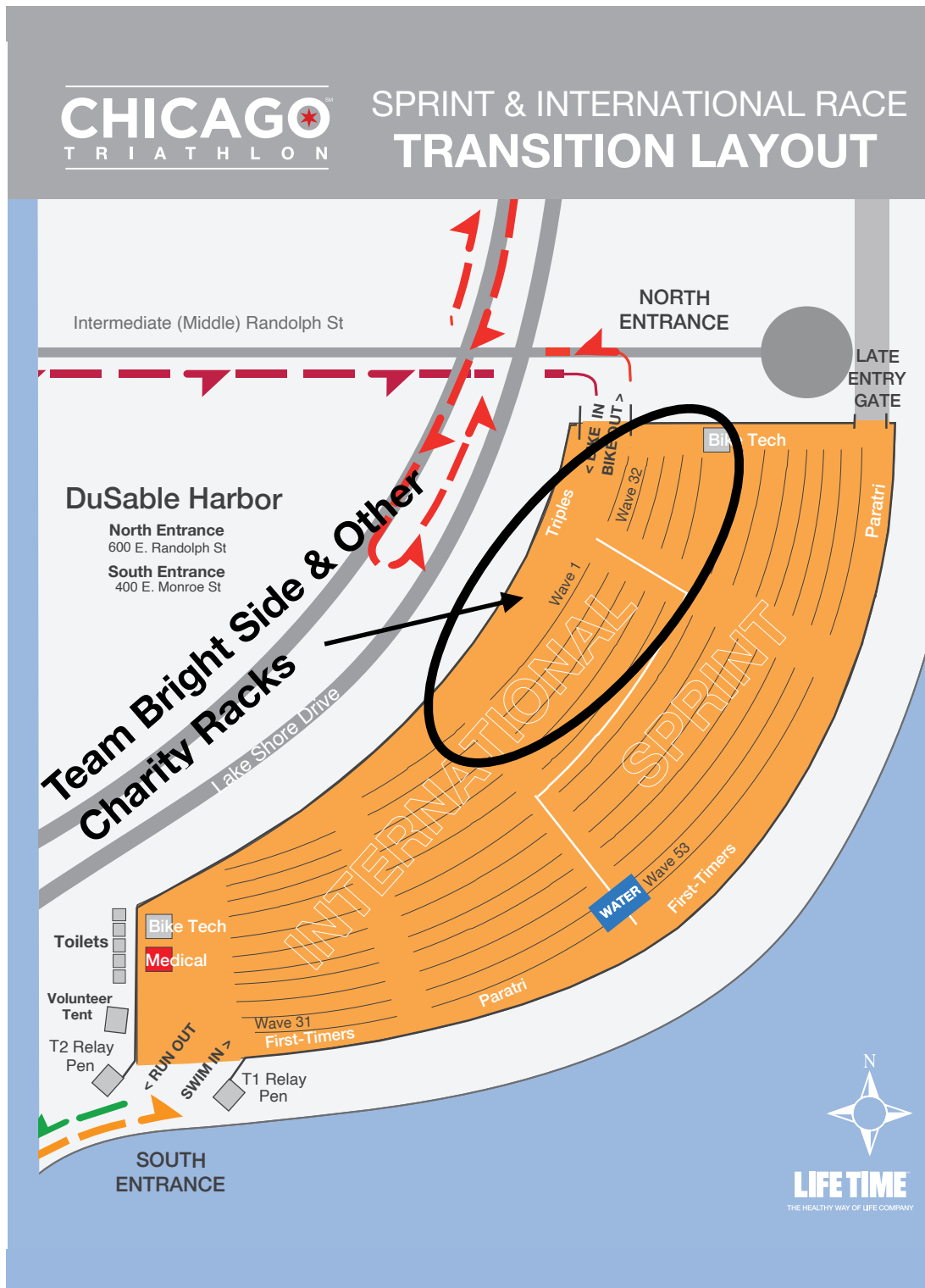
Bright Side Tent: We are located right near the swim start. If you don't know where that is, find the area across Lakeshore Drive from Buckingham Fountain.



Getting Into Transition: Note that if you come for the late opening for the Sprint distance, you must enter transition from the North. More details are in the official [Chicago Triathlon Athlete Guide](#).



Transition Map: We've got prime real estate close to bike out near Randolph Ave.



Packing List

Triathlon Race Day Checklist

racechecklist.com

*Thank you for using the
Triathlon Race Checklist
Generator at
racechecklist.com!*

Swim

- Body Glide
- Ear Plugs
- Goggles
- Wetsuit
- Wetsuit Lube

Bike

- Bike
- Cycling Shoes
- Electrical Tape
- Flat Tire Changing Kit
- Helmet
- Socks
- Sunglasses
- Water Bottles

Run

- Running Shoes
- Socks
- Sunglasses

Clothing

- Post Race Clothing
- Team Bright Side Kit
- Warm Clothing

Miscellaneous

- Body Glide
- Cell Phone
- Energy Gels
- Head Light/Flash Light
- Race Number
- Race Number Belt
- Sun Block
- Towel for Transition Area
- Vaseline