



In the '80s, when triathlon first hit the national scene, participants truly earned the designation as weekend warriors, often having to travel six or more hours to find the nearest start line. Today, those brave souls looking to swim, bike and run don't have to work quite as hard to find a quality event. With tri events spreading across the country like wildfire, triathletes have been given luxuries such as 15-minute drives, sleeping in their own beds and home-course knowledge. In fact, if you're an Upstate triathlete, you could race nearly every weekend without venturing outside a 3-hour radius for your 3-Sport Fix.

SATISFY YOUR -sport fix

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In 2007, The South Carolina Triathlon Series (formally the Palmetto State Triathlon Series) kicks off its sixth season and offers a variety of high quality, professional events for all levels of athlete. From the novice looking to finish his first event to the elite athlete striving for another podium finish, everyone can find an event to fit their needs and goals.

Langley Pond Sprint and International Triathlons – April 28, 2007

The newest addition to the SCTS, the Langley Pond Triathlon offers two distances: sprint and International. The sprint features a 750-meter swim, 20K bike and 5K run, while the International offers up twice the distance (if not twice the fun). Set minutes outside Historic Downtown Aiken, this event has a little of everything, from the private rowing lake, rolling

bike course and flat run. If you have your early season legs beneath you and are ready for a great event, this inaugural Langley Pond Tri may be just for you.

Clemson Sprint Triathlon – May 12, 2007

The Clemson Triathlon is the first Upstate event in the SCTS and has grown to be one of the region's not-to-miss events. More than 500 athletes will toe the line in 2007, and a quarter of the field will be competing in their first tri. The 750-meter swim, 11-mile bike and 3-mile run course is short enough to make completion a near certainty, but tough enough to remind you that triathlons aren't easy.

If you're a first-timer, get there early so you can take in the highly charged early-season energy. Even though this is a great entry-level event, the area's top athletes will be on hand looking to earn big points at this Best of the US Championship qualifier.

Festival of Flowers International Triathlon – June 10, 2007

Greenwood is quickly becoming South Carolina's triathlon Mecca. Greenwood will host no fewer than four triathlons in 2007 – three adult and one youth. The Festival of Flowers Triathlon is the oldest of the bunch and will showcase a great venue to the more than 300 participants. This event is perfect if you want to move up from the sprint

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Greenville Sprint Triathlon **– August 19, 2007**

The Greenville Triathlon is THE Upstate event that welcomes first-timers with open arms. The swim is usually the most intimidating portion for rookies, and this event's short, 400-meter pool swim usually catches the novice's eye. The 15-mile bike, on the other hand, is quite challenging. If this will be your first triathlon, make sure to put in your bike miles. The 3-mile finishing run is a spectator-friendly two-lap affair, so tell your friends and family to come out and cheer you on all the way to finish line. This year the Greenville Sprint will close out at 550 athletes, so register early if you are looking to add it to your race schedule.

The South Carolina Half Ironman **– September 30, 2007**

Let's face it, Ironman is the genesis and end-all of triathlon. Even the first-time tri-

athlete knows what an Ironman is and just how utterly impossible it seems. So, before you move into that sea of insanity, dip your toes into half the distance. Greenwood hosts South Carolina's only Half Ironman and does so with a level of professionalism unmatched by many other area events. Sure, the 1.2-mile swim, 56-mile bike and 13-mile run course may seem too tough to tackle, but with 450 area athletes encouraging you to keep moving, the day goes by quicker than you might imagine. But don't let your dreams outweigh your training, you need to be prepared when you hear the starting gun. This distance is not for the faint hearted. One interesting note, last year Scott Rigsby set a world record at the SC Half by becoming the first, and only, double amputee to finish a Half Iron distance event while racing on prosthetics. This event sets the stage to let impossible dreams come true. All you have to do is believe; then get to work preparing yourself for a six-hour race day.

Triathlon is tough, but racing close to home at a quality event can take one element of uncertainty out of the equation. And in the end the only equation that matters is you versus yourself. In a race like that you can't help but come out on top!