

Having recently moved to Sydney from Adelaide (but still retaining membership with the Lakers), it was interesting to see how training patterns changed due to the different geographic (and demographic) requirements. For any Adelaide triathletes contemplating the move to Sydney I have provided a “guide to Sydney training” which may assist you when contemplating lucrative job offers away from Adelaide.

Swim

Let's be honest – the Thebarton Aquatic centre is a dump – so is the Adelaide Aquatic centre on North Terrace. The choice and quality of Adelaide pools may change once the new centre at Marion is completed but when I left it was still a big hole in the ground.

Swim centres in Sydney on the other hand are of a much higher standard - there are also many more of them. In the area around me in Sydney I have the choice of 2 small pool complexes (25m) or 1 large complex (50m) all within a 10 minute drive. The water is clear, with indoor and outdoor options and there are a wide variety of different squad training options to choose from.

Conclusion: If you want to improve your swimming, go to Sydney

Bike

Adelaide is bike heaven. If you want a flat ride, join the many groups doing the Glenelg to Outer Harbour loop. If you want undulating hills, then extend the loop south from Glenelg to Hallett Cove or even Moana. If you want hills, then there are hundreds of choices in the East from the enjoyable (Norton Summit) to the hard (Corkscrew Road).

In Sydney, riding your bike in the morning (especially Monday to Friday) is a death trap because of the traffic! Going early is not really a strategy because Sydney rush-hour starts just after 6:00am. By the time cyclists have completed their morning training ride and are coming home after 7:00am, most Sydney roads are in grid-lock.

The weekend long ride has fewer issues with the traffic but there is still no comparison with the bike-friendly Adelaide roads. The only answer is therefore to invest in a Computrainer (or similar) and find a quiet spot in the garage or garden shed. No traffic will knock you off your bike and the air is infinitely cleaner than out on the roads.

Conclusion: Adelaide wins hands down

Run

Adelaide has some spectacular running available especially for long runs – Linear Park, the coast run from Seacliff to Tennyson (and beyond), or Belair National Park. There is a good mixture of hills for strength work (unless you live in Glenelg) and flat.

Sydney has very few flat areas especially on the North side of the bridge. Good hills for strength but tiring on the long runs. Also, there are many more cars on the road than in Adelaide.

In Sydney, however, there are many running clubs which are professionally organised and very focussed. For example, the Sydney Striders club (sydneystriders.org.au) has a 10k series which has races every 3-4 weeks as well as 30 measured runs of 30km+ which you can do with the club or alone by downloading the maps (complete with km markers, water and toilet stops).

Also, if you are lucky enough to live close to one of the many National Parks, there are miles and miles of trail runs with no traffic to contend with. The best known (with good accessibility) is the Berrowra to Mosman part of the OXFAM 100km challenge which runs through about 3 different national parks.

Conclusion: Sydney running by a whisker especially if you link up with one of the many running clubs to show you around.

Overall

Despite the advantages of having better pools and well organised runs, nothing can beat getting out of the garage on your bike and onto the open road. Do that in Sydney and you will be taking a far greater risk than in Adelaide. For triathletes, training safe is ultimately the most important thing – in that respect, Adelaide wins over Sydney every time.