



Subscribe
Explore the
Magazine
Give a Gift
Advertising



MASTERS OF VISION
RADAR® WITH POSITIVE RED™ POLARIZED LENS

CLICK HERE TO EXPERIENCE REVOLUTIONARY TECHNOLOGY



INSIDE TRIATHLON THE MULTISPORT LIFE

Search Inside Triathlon:

Home News Features Race Reports Gear Reviews Tech Buyer's Guide Training Forum Events Photos All News Subscribe

[Home](#) > [Gear Reviews](#)

Spring 2008 Racing Flats Review

By Greg Cunningham
Posted May. 27, 2008



adidas adizero Tempo

Our testers have returned from their runs, our shoe guru has collected the data, so here it is! The most in-depth analysis of the top racing flats.

Article Extras
[Photos](#)

ADIDAS

adidas adizero Tempo/Tempaya

\$110, [adidas.com](#)

M: 6-13, 14, 15 (10.7 oz)

W: 5-12 (9.2 oz)

For those of you who suffer from late-stage overpronation—those who roll inward as they approach toe-off—adidas has a shoe for you.

This lightweight trainer/racer features its ForMotion heel, which provides great shock absorption and a smooth heel-to-toe transition. A small piece of adiPRENE 45 under the heel provides a bit more cushioning on initial impact. The midfoot wraps nice and snug for a little extra support for your arch and the three-stripe gille lacing system on both sides of the foot provides that great “hugs-your-foot” feel. A molded EVA sockliner adds to the comfort and provides a great step-in feeling. The uppers on the toe box are comfortable and the overlays don't cause any pinching on the top of the foot.

The midsole is very comfortable and can take you all the way to a marathon without your feet getting beaten up. The 2nd density forefoot provides a little extra stability for the late-stage overpronator and provides a more efficient takeoff. There are also some slightly carved horizontal cutouts (skiving) in the 2nd density to increase flexibility during toe-off. This helps make you more efficient and lets you use less energy when running. The adiPRENE+ under the forefoot provides just enough cushioning to make it comfortable, not stiff. The women's shoe, Tempaya, has a gender-specific midsole, which is a little softer than the men's and the uppers have ClimaCool for ventilation and ClimaLite for moisture management.

The midsole has a few lateral drilled out ports for extra cushioning in the forefoot and the outsole has a slightly tapered edge on the outside of the foot for a smoother transition for toe-off. The one-piece strip of adiWEAR under the instep helps provide a touch bit more stability, which works in conjunction with the 2nd density in the forefoot.

This is a very comfortable shoe and can be used for both training and racing. A person with a wider foot may not be able to wear this shoe though.

Lightweight Trainer/Racer (slight to late phase overpronator)

adidas adizero CS

\$90, [adidas.com](#)

M: 6.5-13, 14, 15 (8.1 oz)

W: 5-12 (7.3 oz)

Adidas has long been known for its great-fitting racing flats and the new adiZERO CS is no different. A snug but not too tight heel counter



A Wheel Sale :-)

NEUVATION

LIGHT - FAST - AERO

C50 Tub. SRP \$999 Sale \$599 1500G	C50 Clin. SRP \$1300 Sale \$899 1600G
--	--

REINVENTING
THE WHEELBUILD

FLASH★POINT

Insider
Training
Secrets
Limited Number
Available!

RockyMounts

Boulder, Colorado
[www.rockymounts.com](#)

TriSports.com

makes stepping into the adiZERO CS feel like getting into the cockpit of an F1 fighter jet. You're clear for take off!



adidas adizero CS

No complaints in the midfoot either. The perfect fit of the heel gradually progresses to the midfoot where, once again, just the right amount of support is offered for a ride that is stable and comfortable.

One of the biggest complaints we've come across from running flat users is that the toe boxes are either too shallow or too narrow (sometimes both). Not the case with the adiZERO CS. The toe box is just snug enough to feel fast, but the addition of a slightly deeper vamp allows your toes to wiggle around freely without unnecessary pressure on the top of the nails. We all know what happens to your toes when there's not enough wiggle room...

If you're looking for a soft and mushy midsole, this is not the shoe for you. It's a racer in every sense of the word, and the low-to-the-ground feel only further adds to this shoe's responsiveness. A slightly more built-up heel with the addition of adiPRENE allows for a "soft crash" for heel strikers or bigger runners, while the addition of adiPRENE+ in the forefoot makes the adiZERO CS as comfortable at Mile 20 as it does at Mile 1 for mid-/forefoot strikers.

Despite its responsive, low-to-the-ground feel, the adizero CS outsole delivers a remarkably soft landing due to the addition of a full-blown rubber forefoot and perfectly placed flex grooves in the forefoot that allow for natural shock distribution and absorption.

All in all, the adiZERO CS is a great racing flat for distances from 5km up to marathon. The shoe is ready for action right out of the box and the addition of a ClimaCool liner and airy mesh help keep your feet cool even on the hottest days. A lightweight but stable midfoot torsion system helps keep the adiZERO CS stable under your foot while still allowing for a smooth transition. Some of our testers said that if they had to get picky and point out one thing that could use improving, it'd be the lacing system. I felt the eyelets were too close together, thus causing undue pressure on the top of the foot.

Neutral Racing Flat (neutral runners)

adidas adizero XT

\$80, adidas.com

M: 6.5-13, 14, 15 (10.0 oz)

W: 5-12 (8.8 oz)

All you XTERRA junkies out there should pay attention: Our dirt dogs can't stop talking about this shoe. It has the best of two worlds in one shoe—the fit of a racing spike and the traction of a great trail shoe.



adidas adizero XT

Stepping into the shoe, you will notice the always-great fit of adidas racing flats—the snug fit of a shoe that just molds to your foot, a heel counter that just grabs you and the three-stripe gillye laces that make sure this shoe is part of your extremities.

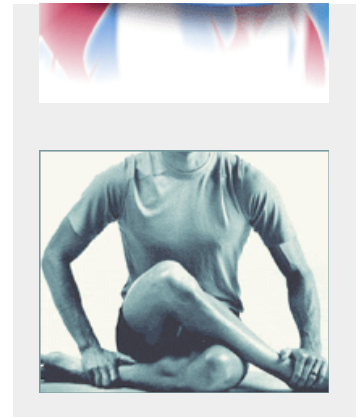
With a midsole that has a lower profile for off-road terrain, you won't feel like a truck with a two-foot ground clearance. This lower profile is great for being able to "feel" the terrain under your feet. You feel very agile and the flexibility of the shoe is a definite bonus. The EVA midsole creates a lightweight cushioned ride with adiPRENE and a 2nd density external heel counter for stability. There is the always-welcomed adiPRENE+ in the forefoot as well. This mixture gives a cushioned ride without worrying about busting up your feet.

The outsole has some wonderfully flexible rubber for grip and durability. Throw in some high-traction rubber in key areas and borrow some soccer cleat design technology and you have some very cool things happening under your feet. Think mountain bike tires that spit out dirt behind you.

Our XTAs (XTERRA Athletes) were very impressed overall with this shoe. Great fit, wonderful cushioning and some amazing traction. One runner said he "felt like a tree frog," even in some of the worst of conditions. Some people liked the cushioning so well, they took it to the street.

Some runners thought that the shoes were running just a little bit short. You may need to check your size and the next size up just to make sure.

Neutral Trail Racing Flat (neutral runners)



BROOKS

Brooks T5 Racer

\$80, brooksrunning.com

Unisex: 3.5-12, 13 (5.9 oz) (men's sizing)

If you are a ultra-efficient runner, here's a shoe for you. One of our runners called it the "marshmallow shoe" because of how it felt on his feet, running on marshmallows. Of course we're just having some fun here but the truth is that this Hansons-Brooks-inspired color scheme is a very cushioned shoe.

The heel and midfoot have a good, snug fit while the toe box is just roomy enough to be very comfortable. The overlays across the top of the foot are just enough in order for the toe box not to feel too roomy (height wise).

The HydroFlow unit in the heel and the lightweight EVA midsole create a very cushioned ride. Located under the arch is Brooks' HyperPod construction, which offers a touch of support without adding weight to this flat.

The outsole has durable HPR rubber under the heel for durability and a blown rubber forefoot for cushioning. This pod-like look to the forefoot helps lighten the weight of the shoe as well creating that "marshmallow" feel we described before. While this shoe may be best suited for a marathon, it can certainly handle distances from the 5km to the marathon.

After a track workout, someone came up to one of our runners and asked what that HOT looking shoe was. Another picked up the shoe to see how light it was. They were impressed.

Neutral Racing Flat (neutral runners)

Brooks Racer ST 3

\$85, brooksrunning.com

U: 3,5-12, 13, 14 (8.7 oz) (men's sizing)

Just looking at this shoe makes you want to run fast. With a new look and some cool styling, complete with "Pimp My Ride" pinstriping on the microfiber overlays, this shoe can cover everything from tempo/track workouts to the marathon.

The heel counter will hug your foot just right and the midfoot has proven to fit very well. The toe box on this shoe does flare out a bit, as do most of Brooks' shoes, to accommodate a slightly wider forefoot. Folks with bunions or wider feet will love this design feature.

Keeping the shoe "race flat light" is Brooks' S-257 midsole, complete with HydroFlow in the heel and a very breathable Air Mesh upper. The Diagonal Rollbar (DRB) located in the dual density of the shoe and the midfoot shank creates just a touch of stability for those needing more than a neutral flat.

The crash pad decouples very well and the outsole has carbon rubber for long-term impacts. The forefoot has a very durable rubber, lasting longer than most forefoot outsoles. Moving the foot from heel-to-toe is seamless. "A shoe that feels smooth at all speeds" is how one person described this shoe.

Runners using supportive inserts or orthotics will also like this shoe. Both fit very well. A great combination of cushioning, support and flexibility pretty much sums up this shoe.

Lightweight Trainer/Racer (mild to moderate overpronator)



Brooks T5 Racer



Brooks Racer ST 3

NEW BALANCE

New Balance 903 (NEW)

\$100, newbalance.com

M: 7-13, 14, 15 (9.3 oz) (2E = all sizes)

W: 5-11, 12 (7.4 oz) (D = all sizes)



Debuting in April, the 903 is a really nice, updated shoe. With a few minor tweaks from the 902, our runners are finding this new show to be excellent. The heel fit is snug with no slipping or rubbing. Laced up, the midfoot and toe box are equally well fitting and comfortable. The overlays on the toe box have been pulled back to open up the forefoot. For someone who has bunions, there is adequate width in the toe box. This is resulting is a much better fit, not as restrictive as before. There are fewer overlays on the uppers, resulting in a cleaner looking and better fitting shoe.



New Balance 903

This is a lighter weight shoe with enough cushion and support to use for training, and it brings some extra responsiveness that makes it fun to run in. The midfoot shank (stability web) provides enough support to feel responsive without being too rigid.

The outsole has a blown-rubber forefoot for a very nice, cushioned feel. There are more open flex grooves on outside of the foot compared to the instep of the forefoot. This is to let the foot transition better while the instep provides just a bit more support because of the slightly filled-in flex grooves.

We do need to mention that this shoe is running one half-size large on everyone so you will probably need to size down from your normal size. Also worth mentioning is the fact that the 903 is one half-ounce LIGHTER than its predecessor. Those with supportive inserts or orthotics will be happy to know that this shoe will accommodate both very well.

Lightweight Trainer/Racer (moderate overpronators)

New Balance RC600

\$85, newbalance.com

Unisex: 6-12, 13, 14 (8.7 oz) (men's sizing)

The one thing you notice when putting on this shoe is how snug it is—maybe a bit too snug for some. Thin socks may be in order for this shoe. This flat will definitely hug your heel and the midfoot is equally as snug. There is no N-lock on this model but it does have overlays that wrap around your foot on both sides. The mesh upper is very breathable while the overlays on the toebox are placed just right to feel open but not restrictive. The overlays near the bottom of the eyelets wrap back on the foot to give what some people describe as a “track spike” feel, hugging the heel and midfoot while letting the toe box feel very comfortable.



New Balance RC600

The midsole feels quick and responsive and there is some dual density located in the heel of the shoe. Not to make that feel too rigid on your heel strike, there is Abzorb in the heel and a small “hole” under the heel exposing the Abzorb, which increases the cushioning upon impact. The midfoot stability web is very supportive and has a vented port for breathability and the forefoot has Abzorb as well and another vented port. The forefoot has blown rubber for extra cushioning.

The 600 is feeling snug on a bunch of our runners. While it has a great combination of cushioning and stability, folks with wider feet or feet that swell a bit may need to look elsewhere. Some felt they were just a touch short. You may want to size up when trying on the shoes before you buy them. Those who can comfortably wear this shoe are going to really enjoy it.

Stability Racing Flat

PEARL IZUMI

Pearl Izumi Streak (NEW)

\$110, pearlizumi.com

M: 7-13, 14 (8.8 oz)

W: 5-11, 12 (6.9 oz)

Pearl Izumi has done what many people didn't think it could do: build a racing flat. How did PI do that? Well, there's no syncroframe in this shoe—that's how. The gang at PI has figured out how their beloved frames can be missing and have designed a very nice racing flat.

When slipping the shoe on, you are going to get the always-



Pearl Izumi Streak

comfortable fit that one has come to expect from Pearl Izumi. The clean one-piece upper fits very well and the heel counter and collar offers a comfortable fit. The all-gilley lacing system wraps the upper to your foot and also provides additional support by having the lacing system incorporated into the shoe itself. As several people have mentioned, “it’s like having fingers wrapping around your foot.”

There is the exposed SKYDEX crash pad as well as an encapsulated high rebound SKYDEX forefoot pad to increase the cushioning and durability of the shoe. The midsole has a lower profile that has proven to be very comfortable. Adding to the comfort is a high performance dual-density insole, which only adds to the great step-in feeling of this shoe.

As a neutral flat, the SKYDEX creates a smooth initial impact and transitions nicely to the forefoot. The blown-rubber forefoot outsole and open flex grooves just make this a sweet ride. With a smooth toe-off, this shoe can be worn for any distance. Runners needing just a touch of support will like to know that a supportive insert/orthotic fits rather well in this shoe.

One thing our runners have noticed is that this shoe has some crazy-long shoelaces. For race situations, you will most likely need to trim these down. Otherwise, you may feel your laces slapping against your legs, which we all know can be slightly irritating at times. Overall, this is a really nice initial racing flat from Pearl Izumi. All of our runners were pleasantly surprised.

Neutral Racing Flat

SAUCONY

Saucony Type A2 (NEW)

\$90, saucony.com

M: 7-13, 14 (6.9 oz)

W: 5-12 (5.9 oz)

“Take a look at me” is what the NEW Type A2 seems to be saying to people. Another racing flat redone from the ground up had our testers of the prior model fighting for a pair of these shoes. While the initial feel of the heel counter had some people worried because the fabric felt a little slick, that sentiment disappeared after a few runs that led to people saying the material seemed a bit more abrasive. But abrasive in a good way, as it seems to cause the heel to slip less. Whew!



Saucony Type A2

The midfoot has a gusseted tongue (tongue straps), which provides a more snug fit and the forefoot feels very comfortable, compliments of a very breathable upper, just like Fastwitch 3. A slight overlay wrap at the ball of the foot gives a comfortable, snug fit to the forefoot.

With a lower profile, the midsole offers a wonderful blend of cushioning without being soft—better than what some had expected. Lower profile sometimes means a too-thin midsole, but not in this case. “It felt like a regular trainer with half the weight” is how one person put it. The A2 also has full-length drainage ports that run up the middle of the shoe. This adds to the drainage/breathability of the shoe while providing some extra cushioning, or give, to the shoe. There is a neutral midfoot shank added to the instep so your midfoot won’t bottom out during your heel-to-toe transition.

For those of you with a sense of humor, you’ll appreciate the crash pad, which says, “Kiss This.” If the person running behind you can read this, you need to pick up the pace, because he or she is right on your butt. Aside from that, outsole is comfortable and very flexible. Having a lot of flex grooves on the lateral side of the shoe and two separate ‘flat’ pieces on the instep, this adds a bit stability as you go into your toe-off phase. For as light as this flat is, the outsole seems to be lasting quite a while.

On a final note, one of our guru racing-flat trathletes stated the following: “For as light as this shoe is, it had EXCEPTIONAL cushioning! The best I’ve ever felt in a shoe of this weight.”

Neutral Racing Flat

Saucony Grid Tangent 3

\$95, saucony.com

M: 7-13, 14 (9.4 oz)



W: 5-11, 12 (7.9 oz)

Debuting last October, the Tangent 3 was totally redesigned. The overall fit of the shoe seems to accommodate more runners than before. The slightly sculpted midfoot without the internal fit sleeve is a touch wider and most runners seem to like the change. The heel collar is very comfortable and hugs the heel quite well. The uppers are comfortable on the foot and the medial side of the upper has a tighter weave than the lateral side, resulting in a modified arch lock wrap around the middle of the foot.

The large, tuckered overlay around the middle of the foot is gone, which in turn makes the Tangent 3 a lighter shoe by almost an ounce. The men's shoe weighs in around 9.4 ounces while the women's shoe is around 7.9—both slightly heavier than racing flats.

The midfoot shank has been widened to provide a more stable platform and wraps slightly under the arch in to the dual density posting. The heel-to-toe transition is as good as ever. For a lightweight stability trainer, this shoe is incredibly comfortable. Several of our runners have raced marathons in this shoe without a problem. Self-labeled "heavier" runners love the durability of this shoe as well.

Lightweight Trainer/Racer (mild to moderate overpronators)

Saucony Fastwitch 3 (NEW)

\$85, saucony.com

M: 7-13, 14 (7.3 oz)

W: 5-12 (6.2 oz)

If you liked the prior model but felt like the forefoot may have been a tad too thin, then you need to try on the new Fastwitch 3. Redone from the ground up, this shoe may win over a new batch of runners.



Saucony Grid Tangent 3



Saucony Grid Fastwitch 3

Like the prior model, you will get that great step-in feel to the shoe. The shoe just seems to hug your foot perfectly from your heel to your toes. The 3s have a new VERY breathable upper and have eliminated a lot of the overlays. The heel collar and top of the foot (lacing area) have a noticeably comfortable fit. By eliminating the fabric-stitched overlays and incorporating some welded overlays while keeping the mesh windows open, the shoe feels more comfortable without any pinching.

The midsole is even more comfortable by being a bit thicker and having a much-improved midfoot shank. There are numerous drainage ports in the forefoot and they work incredibly well. A water test showed great amounts of drainage and breathability. This shoe also dried quickly.

With the addition of a thicker midsole comes a thicker outsole as well. If you felt more of the road under your foot in the prior model, the Fastwitch 3 takes care of that. This shoe is definitely more comfortable on longer runs. Having a blown-rubber forefoot with very open flex grooves gives you a smooth transition for toe-off. Racing a marathon or a full Ironman is not out of the question in this shoe.

Lightweight Trainer/Racer (mild to moderate overpronator)

ASICS

Asics Piranha SP

\$110, asicsamerica.com

Unisex: 6.5-12 (4.8 oz) (men's sizing)

If you can wear next to nothing on your feet for races, continue reading. If not, stop here. The Piranha SP is built on the same platform as Asics' Japanese racing flats—very low profile. The heel and midfoot felt very comfortable on our runners while the forefoot felt a bit wide. This is mainly due to the very breathable uppers and a lack of any overlays in the shoe.



Asics Piranha SP

The Solyte midsole provides the same cushioning as most of the Asics line does, a nice blend of cushioning and responsiveness. The outsole (Magic Sole) helps reduce the

weight of the shoe as well as having much of the midsole/outsole carved out.

For the ultra-efficient and light-on-his-feet runner, this shoe deserves a look. Be careful of running high mileage in them—keep them for the track or races. Our testers noticed signs of wear much earlier than most racing flats.

Neutral Racing Flat (neutral runners)

Asics Gel DS-Trainer 13 (NEW)

\$100, asicsamerica.com

M: 6-13, 14, 15 (9.6 oz)

W: 5-12 (7.6 oz)

This NEW shoe debuted January 2008. Billed as a lightweight trainer, this shoe has many people using it for racing as well. Totally redesigned from the ground up, this is the 13th generation of the DS-Trainer. For the superstitious, you may want to find the prior model or wait for the DS-Trainer 14.



Asics GEL-DS Trainer 13

The heel and midfoot provide a nice, snug, comfortable feeling while the toe box feels a little looser than prior models. This is not a bad thing as prior models were too tight for most people. The “wider” toe box is created by a new asymmetrical two-piece upper that gives some flex to the top of the toe box. No pinching here. The asymmetrical lacing system is very comfortable. Flying under the radar for the lacing is how the eyelets are separated. They are not one entire piece. This separation allows the upper to flex with the foot without causing any overlay pinching.

The Solyte midsole offers a very comfortable ride and the slightly exposed heel gel unit provides great impact cushioning, as does the forefoot gel. The Space Trusstic System (STS) unit has been slightly modified to provide some additional support while the outsole itself is very much the same. A new sockliner adds to the step-in comfort of the shoe.

A few side notes: In these trying financial times, it's nice to know that the price of this shoe went down \$10. This shoe is also running at least one half-size small on everyone who's tested it, so you will need to size up. The other thing is people who use any supportive insert/orthotic are finding the depth of the heel counter too shallow. Otherwise, this is a very comfortable shoe—much better than its predecessor. Maybe not the best for a 5km but definitely worthy of a 10km to a marathon.

Lightweight Trainer/Racer (moderate overpronators)

Asics Gel-Bandito (NEW)

\$100, asicsamerica.com

Unisex: 4-13, 14, 15 (7.9 oz) (Men's sizing)

What was once the Ohana Racer is now the Bandito. What's the difference? Just a few minor tweaks to the overlays and some added dual-density from the heel through the arch.



Asics Gel Bandito

The heel counter feels very nice and the midfoot wraps a bit more snug, comparative to the DS-Trainer. The Bandito has a more tapered midfoot, hence the tighter fit. People with a higher instep may find this a bit too tight. The toe box fits quite well with the overlays providing a snug fit. A few testers with slightly narrower feet have noticed some overlay buckling on the toe vamp. Xacto knife, anyone? The upper is extremely breathable which will keep your feet very comfortable on the hottest of days.

The heel is very cushioned and provides a really soft landing. Yes, there is an encapsulated gel unit in the heel. Transitioning to the forefoot is a breeze while the forefoot feels cushioned but not too soft. No gel in the forefoot for this model, though. The midfoot Trusstic System provides a little support, as does the dual density. There are three drilled-out ports in the midsole for ventilation and drainage. One port is situated behind the ball of the foot and two are under the toes. These ports will drain out water, perspiration and so on, while letting the shoe be a bit more air-conditioned.

The outsole has a full-width flex groove, which makes for a smooth toe-off. A slightly higher resistant triangular-shaped outsole at the top of the shoe seems to make the shoe wear better and provide a little support on toe-off for our testers.

Just like the DS-Trainer, our testers who use any supportive insert/orthotic are finding the depth of the heel counter too shallow. Other than that, this is a very good shoe.

Lightweight Racer (mild to moderate overpronators)

NIKE

Nike Air Zoom Marathoner

\$85, nikerunning.com

Unisex: 4-12 (8.0 oz) (men's sizing)

One of the staple racing flats from Nike, this shoe is always on a "best of" list somewhere. If you are patriotic or just want to play the part on TV, then you must try on a pair of these clean lines, red, white and blue flats.



Nike Air Zoom Marathoner

The Marathoner just fits well from heel to toe. The heel counter just holds your heel in place while the midfoot is snugly wrapped and the toe box is just plain comfortable. The all-gilley lacing system provides that sock-like fit which hugs the foot just right. In addition, the midfoot wrap is accentuated by having a gilley attached to the red stripe overlay, which helps grab the foot. The toe box is snug but surprisingly comfortable. The suede-like (soft frame) overlays are extremely comfortable and do not cause any pinching, and the uppers are extremely breathable. Minor details like the tongue of the shoe designed perfectly to fit the shape of the shoe add to the experience. There is a midfoot shank more pronounced under the arch for extra support.

The sockliner has been improved with extra cushioning under the heel as well as a more resilient foam under the front half of the foot. There is an encapsulated heel Zoom Air unit in the full-length Phylon midsole. Much to our runners' surprise, the phylon midsole was a bit stiffer than expected. This may not be a bad thing, as this stiffness helps create a very "quick strike" feel underfoot. No marshmallow softness to this shoe. Your feet hit the ground and you just feel fast. "Your feet just take off" is how one runner put it. In addition, the toeoff area of the midsole is perforated for breathability and is curved to enhance the toe-off phase.

The outsole of the shoe is full-length carbon rubber with a minimal thickness. This also helps save weight on the shoe as well as providing a more durable outsole.

Supportive Racer

PUMA

Puma Complete Road Racer II (NEW)

\$90, pumarunning.com

Unisex: 4-13, 14 (7.4 oz)

If you like a snug-fitting racing flat, then Puma has a shoe for you.

With a step-in feeling of having your heel comfortably snug, as opposed to comfortably numb (insert Pink Floyd into the background here) and a midfoot that just wraps around your foot, you know this shoe is just built for speed. The Racer II provides an asymmetrical gilley lacing to mimic the shape of the foot, while the open mesh upper provides some very nice ventilation. Did we mention that the TEXCARE-bamboo lining provides deodorization? De-odor what? It helps eliminate smelly feet. The lining also provides moisture and heat management. The overlay wrapping the foot behind the ball of the foot provides that track-spike feeling with the toe box feeling just roomy enough with being to restrictive.



Puma Complete Rpad Racer II

The midsole uses Puma's IdCell, a long lasting EVA, in the heel and forefoot. The midsole had our testers in one of two camps: not enough cushioning or a perfect amount of cushioning. This depended on whether someone was a harder foot striker or lighter on his or her feet. Aside from that, the midfoot shank offers a touch of support and a medial flare to the forefoot to help reduce overpronation.

The outsole has a good carbon-rubber crash pad as well as using the EverLite outsole to lighten the shoe and provide great flexibility. The EverLite outsole is a fabric-based material with injected TPU lugs. This adds to that great lightweight feeling of this flat. One runner commented on the neon-yellow color: "You better be ready to roll or you're going to hear it from your friends."

Neutral Racing Flat (neutral to mild overpronator)

MIZUNO

Mizuno Wave Elixir 3 (NEW)

\$100, mizunousa.com

M: 7-13, 14, 15

W: 6-11

This shoe has been completely redone for 2008. The Elixir 3 has the new DynaMotion Fit to enhance fit and performance on your heel. The lacing system tends to wrap the foot a bit better due to the fact that eyelet rows are two separate pieces, not one continuous piece, which allows the midfoot to mold around your foot. The RunBird logo is designed to also wrap around the middle of your foot. Pretty clever.

The AIRmesh upper makes this a very breathable shoe. This shoe looks a bit cleaner as well, compliments of having less overlays.

The midsole has a lower profile, which is closer to the ground, and because of this, the shoe is lighter than before. Along with the AP midsole, the combination of the SmoothRide and Wave Plate technology, the Elixir provides a smooth heel-to-toe transition. A thicker sockliner adds to the good, snug, cushioned feel of this shoe.

There is a new forefoot outsole as well, located under the forefoot. This outsole is called G3. In combination with the blown-rubber forefoot, this hard-rubber outsole provides superior grip with less weight.

The clean bright red lines of this shoe just make you look fast by having them on your feet. That's why a lot of our runners use them to race in as well.

Lightweight Trainer/Racer (mild to moderate overpronators)

Mizuno Wave Precision 8

\$85, mizunousa.com

M: 7-13, 14

W: 6-11

Built on Mizuno's Neutral Last, this lightweight trainer/racer can cover any distance thrown at it. This shoe has an improved fit to boast about.

The Precision has a very good-fitting heel but slightly less snug fit, compared to the Elixir 3. Not to worry—it's designed this way. There is a minimal amount of overlays on this shoe, which our runners really appreciated. The AIRmesh upper is a breathable as always. Adding to the comfort of the toe box area is the open mesh of the upper, which will accommodate anyone with a slightly wider forefoot. The lacing system has a notch cut out of the upper to create a flex point on the top of the foot to create a more snug fit to the shoe. Welded eyelets on the top half help reduce a bit of weight. The bottom half of the eyelet row is attached to the RunBird logo to help "snug up" the midfoot.

The midsole height has been dropped, like the Elixir 3, to lessen the weight without sacrificing the shoe. Since the Precision is built on a neutral last, the shoe feels very cushioned because of the flexible wave plates under the heel.

On the outsole, the entire forefoot is cushioned with blown rubber to create a very comfortable and cushioned ride. This shoe has a very fast, clean look to back up the speed that people generally run at in this shoe.

Neutral Runners



Mizuno Wave Elixir 3



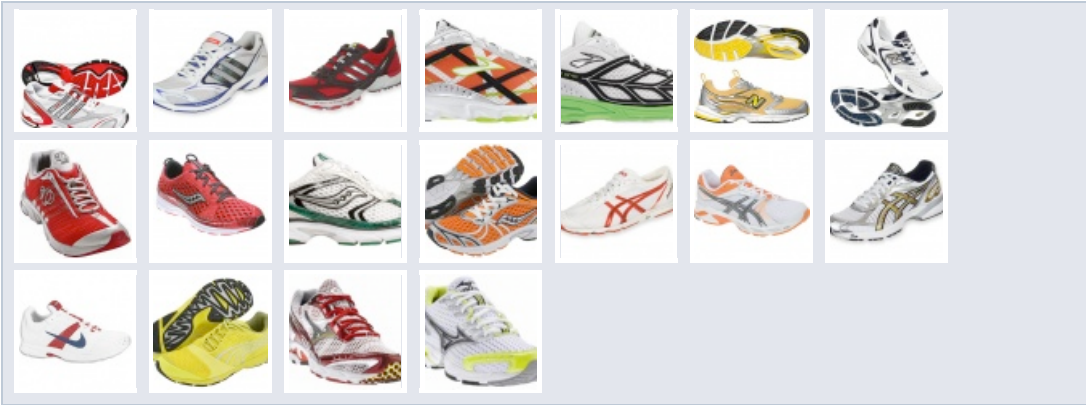
Mizuno Wave Precision 8

Greg Cunningham knows running shoes. He spends his days knee-deep in shoes doing gait analysis and studying footwear as the shoe buyer at Fleet Feet Sports in Boulder, Colorado. A runner for more than 25 years, Greg puts on races, has worked for a former pro triathlete, has put on triathlon camps and clinics, is heavily involved in the run/tri market and contributes quarterly shoe reviews to InsideTri.com.

Share InsideTri



Photo Gallery



[Top Stories](#) > [More Gear Reviews](#)

You may also be interested in...

- ▶ [Zoot Ultra Tempo+](#)
- ▶ [Technical Q&A with Lennard Zinn](#)
- ▶ [Highest bidder to win limited edition Zoot shoe](#)
- ▶ [2XU High Performance Compression Tights](#)
- ▶ [The Protein Punch](#)

Article Tools
Email it.
Print it.
+Share it.

Sections

- [News & Features](#)
- [Race Reports](#)
- [Tech Reports](#)
- [Training](#)
- [All News](#)

IT Features

- [Videos](#)
- [Photos](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Forum](#)
- [RSS Feed](#)

www.insidetriathlon.com

Inside Triathlon

- [Contact Us](#)
- [Advertise](#)
- [Careers](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [Login](#)

Affiliates

- [Competitor](#)
- [VeloNews](#)
- [Tour de France](#)
- [VeloGear](#)
- [VeloPress](#)
- [VeloSwap](#)