

## Enhanced Reviews

### Rudy Project Syton Open aero helmet – Being Aero never looked so cool!

[www.rudyprojectusa.com/products/helmets/syton.htm](http://www.rudyprojectusa.com/products/helmets/syton.htm)

I must preface this review by telling all that I have a special fondness for aero time trial helmets. Like women and shoes, I collect sleek looking aero helmets, even though until recently most were illegal in the USA (but that did not stop the myriad of helmet manufactures from turning out countless aero helmet versions for the Professional peleton). Who can forget Cinelli's solid white mini aero-shell made popular by Bernard Hinault in the 1980s (I did get away with using this lid in a few collegiate TT's), or Linmar's eggshell thin helmet worn by Jan Ullrich in his gold medal TT ride at the 2000 Olympics, or the storm-trooperish MET aero job made famous by the Gerolsteiner team in 2003. Simply put, the problem with all of these aero lids was that they offered no protection and subsequently were illegal for bike racing and triathlons in the USA (and ultimately became obsolete in Europe last year after the passage tougher helmet guidelines for Pro riders – hence the bulkier aero helmets worn in the 2004 Tour De France).



*Hinault in the vent-less Cinelli helmet*

Why should you consider an aero helmet? Recent studies show that over a 40km time trial, an aero time trial helmet can save you as much as 30 seconds over a regular helmet and that might be worth a few places in your next Olympic distance race (source: <http://www.timetrial.org/aerodynamics.htm>). Of course, one can never quantify the obvious psychological boost of such a piece of equipment (as my former coach used to say, never underestimate the importance of looking and feeling fast).



*The Rudy Syton Open Helmet (in white)*

Last year, one of the only UCI approved (and therefore *legal*) aero helmets for use in a triathlon or USA Cycling sanctioned event was Louis Garneau's (LG) Prologue helmet, which in my opinion was a tad on the obtrusive side (meaning, I really did not care for it's aesthetics). Several companies added *legal* aero helmets to their line up this year, but the one that truly caught me eye was an offering from **Rudy Project** – the **Rudy Project Syton Open** (pictured to the left).

Sure, I've been using the excellent Rudy Project T-Rex helmet for many years, so when I saw the design for the new **Syton Open** helmet last fall I immediately placed my order. As the backorders amassed I could hardly contain my excitement for the arrival of the Spring 2005 shipment. Upon arrival, I was certainly not disappointed with the wait!

Perhaps taking some styling cues from the hugely popular (yet heavy, vent-less, and non-UCI approved) Cinelli Aerolite helmet, the **Rudy Syton Open** is sleek, less obtrusive than most of the competition, and considerably lighter than expected. The **Rudy Syton Open** weighs in at just over 12 oz (compared to 11 oz on the Rudy Project T-Rex, 12.9 oz on the LG Prologue, and an incredible 14.8 oz on the new LG Rocket), and best of all – it is legal for racing in the States. The **Rudy Syton Open** helmet has it all. The helmet has a unique cockpit-like fit, which ensures a snug, yet comfortable feel when strapped on. The aero tail (dividing into two smaller tails at the end) is not as long and some of the helmets seen on the European Pro circuit, which means us average Joe's can wear it without creating too much of a buzz among the field (hey, is that Lance over there in that aero lid?). Rudy Project also makes the **Syton SuperComp**, which adds a visor and cheek guards for those who want even greater styling and aerodynamics. Both helmets provide ample venting to keep the rider cool under the heat of competition.



*Rudy Syton SuperComp*

At roughly \$150, why not surprise the triathlete in your family with the **Rudy Project Syton Open** helmet!

#### Mikael Hanson

Enhance Sports Triathlon Team

**Mikael Hanson** is a USAC certified cycling coach, certified Schwinn indoor cycling instructor, and soon will be completing his USAT triathlon coaching certification. Mikael spent much of his youth as a Cat 2 cyclist, racing in America's heartland (Wisconsin for those not in the know). Now in his 30s, Mikael is the ultimate multi-sport junkie, competing in numerous cross-country ski races, bike races, running events, and duathlons/triathlons during the calendar year and recently founded Enhance Sports, a multi-sport coaching and racing company based in New York City.