



Race Report

Race day morning I woke up at 4am and fixed by usual oatmeal with a little brown sugar and cinnamon and had my usual green tea. I mixed a water bottle with Skratch and packed a banana to have before the race.

I got to the transition by 5:15ish and was all set up by 5:45 and ready. Upon arrival I heard the news about the water temp. being 77 degrees so I left my wetsuit in my transition bag. It didn't bother me until I started talking with a couple other gals about our tri shirt/bra gapping and catching water during the swim. We all tucked in and synched up as well as possible and I just hoped for the best.

I sipped on the Skratch all morning and ate the banana about 6:45. My fueling plan called for a gel, but I skipped it (maybe mistake #1) but I did take salt before starting.

As we waited to get into the water, Diana said she was going to try to draft off of me. So when we got in I kept looking for her – was comforting to have a teammate right there. The age group waves (of women at least) seemed small enough and manageable. I pictured hundreds starting at once so the smaller group was great.

I tried to be near the front line when the swim started but ended up behind a couple



gals. I had feet in my face for a few minutes and had to keep looking up to find a way around a few people. Once I got through I felt as though I had a decent swim. I was breathing only on the left side as when I'd try to breath on the right I'd get a face full of water nearly every time. After the second turn and when heading back I kept seeing who I thought was Diana next to me. I

was glad to see her... until the exit and I found it wasn't her. Just before getting to the exit I was startled by someone grabbing and holding onto my ankle. I had been bummed several times but the grab was unexpected.

Over all I tried to enjoy the swim, buoy to buoy. I felt as though I could have gone faster but thought it best to save the energy since I was likely working harder and kicking more without the wetsuit. When I saw my swim time on my watch I was a little bummed but

knew my goal time would be out the window. I just kept telling myself to enjoy the race and not worry about the times.

T1 took longer than I would have preferred but I thought it best to take that time and put on the compression calf sleeves that I couldn't wear during the swim. Since I'd trained in them for most of the long ride/runs and had no issues I wanted to wear them for the race too.

After getting out on the bike I felt great. The first part of the ride was very fast and somewhat congested. I tried pacing off what looked like a couple good riders. It was difficult to maintain the legal riding distance through the narrow areas of the course. I kept looking at my average speed and thinking it was too fast but I really didn't feel as though I was working very hard. I would pass the guys I was pacing with on the hills and they'd pass me on the straights. Near the end of the first lap they made some questionable (safety) moves on corners where I slowed to be safe and subsequently lost my pacers.

The second two laps I kept trying to hold back and slowed myself. I took salt twice on the ride and drank $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Perpetuem (it got really warm and disgusting). I did not take



a gel (mistake #2) as I had planned. I think it was near the end of the second lap I began noticing my hands were swelling. I had never experienced it while riding before. I also noticed I was not sweating much but I did not feel as though it was very warm either. I drank all of the 35oz of water and refilled with a 16oz bottle on the go. I did not drink all of the water but tried to keep drinking throughout.

Before I left T2 I let the kind volunteer put sunscreen on my neck and arms since it felt as though there was not a drop of shade on the course. I drank more water than too. As I began running I immediately felt horrible. Sluggish. Before the first aid station I stopped and stretched for a few seconds and thought maybe I needed to take a couple deep breaths. It didn't help. I got to the first aid station and took water as I walked through. I could see the next aid station across the riverbed so I knew it was not far and kept going.

I was really surprised at how terrible I was feeling. I took salt but had to force it down. I did not feel as though I could get a gel down (mistake #3 or 4 or...) and didn't try. I pushed my way through the first loop, barely. I didn't walk for more than a few seconds at a time but did between aid stations. Walked the aid stations too and began putting ice under my hat and in my bra. I didn't feel hot but I was not sweating so I was concerned. I did drink one bottle of e-fuel during the first loop and I cannot say I

noticed it helping. There were times I felt woozy and stumbled a bit. It was a struggle to keep the mental monkeys from going ape-shit. During that first loop I seriously wondered if I was going to be able to finish. And I seriously wondered why in the heck anyone does those dang races!

I didn't see any teammates during the first loop – which made it more difficult – I seriously was hoping Laura would going to catch up to me!! But she didn't. At the last aid station I wrapped ice in my bandana (since I wasn't using it for sweat as planned) and put it around my neck. I saw Kristen, with my brother and friend Cathy near the end of the first loop and they offered me everything including the shirt off their back! Awesome people!



I pushed on and when I got to the first aid station on the second loop I drank a cup of cola and used the restroom. It was the first time I peed since “acclimating” to the lake before the race start. Since I could see the next aid station I trucked on. Somehow I began feeling better... and actually began feeling... um, good. I ran (slow) aid station to aid station for the rest of the loop. Each aid station I would drink water and cola or Gatorade. I ate a couple bites of banana twice throughout. I took salt once more too. I alternated putting ice in my hat, bra or bandana at each aid station too.

Crossing the final bridge I knew I only had about 3 more miles and totally felt as though I could do it. I was doing it! My Garmin chirp at mile 13 (music to my ears!) but it was still a LONG 0.1-mile to go... great! I've had issues with the accuracy of my Garmin throughout training so I figured I was off a bit... but it was a long bit.



During the last mile or two (maybe more) I played leapfrog with a gal with 46 on her leg. I had no idea if my 45 was legible since I was wearing the compression sleeves. I passed her just after the final aid station and felt as though I was in front of her for a while. Until the finish shoot... dang it was long.

I was so excited to make that turn but that fenced off area just kept going and going... my mental monkeys were acting up like crazy! Why the heck do we have to run around the park to finish??? Seriously, then a hill (probably is only 2 feet tall but felt like climbing to Santiago Peak!)... the fenced area changed to the black Ironman logoed

banners as I made the final turn. That's when 46 came up on me and said, "Lets finish together."

I was torn really that she caught back up to me – did she know I was in her age group? Was she saving us both from a sprint finish (thank the universe!)? Or was she just being terribly kind since we'd been running somewhat together for the last part of the race? Maybe all three. I was grateful to finish like that for whatever the reason. (Ok, I was grateful to finish at all!)



Take aways from this race:

I ditched my fueling plan – obviously a big mistake. Shows my inexperience too. When I should have taken a gel I just didn't feel like I could put it in my stomach but I should have tried. I didn't start drinking the cola until the second loop for fear it would upset my stomach (something new – never tried it before) and I didn't want to feel crappy as I did and have an upset stomach. Maybe starting it sooner would have helped! I don't have any idea why my hands swelled. I did drink lots of water all day Saturday and did not feel as though I was dehydrated going into the race, but maybe I was.