

## **2013 March 01 - March 02 Florida Double IRON Race Report** by Bobby Leong on Monday, March 11, 2013 at 9:00pm

2013 is to be year of "do-overs" for me - starting with the Florida Double IRON. Knowing what to expect this year made preparations easier and I expected better results but sometimes life throws you curves. I had the goal of completing this race the second time around, but that was not to be.

**Pre-race:** Training: I put in the same level of training (15-20 hour weeks) that resulted in a 3:03, 4.8 mile swim and 17:00, 224 mile bike, and 8.75 miles of the 52.4 mile run last year. This time I didn't have to contend with a stress fracture that ruled out any run training. I was able to include a good run training program this time around. I was also careful to include two overnight brick sessions to deal with transitional fatigue issues. Rest leading up to the race: One and a half weeks before the race, I felt my cold coming back. I totally shut down any training in an effort to shake off the cold. It was a bad night-time cough so I treated it with strong meds. Unfortunately, it disturbed my sleep patterns and I went into this race more fatigued than I should have been.

### **Equipment prep:**

I thought I had left plenty of time to have the local bike shop unbox my bike, assemble it and have it tuned up. Unfortunately, the bike shop assembled the bike poorly, late and I suspected may have damaged the rear wheel - more about that later.

### **The Swim: - 3:29:15**

I had a disappointing swim. I was shooting for a 3:00-3:06 swim but ended up with a 3:29. Had it not been for six 60-90 sec breaks to adjust my goggles and a 14 min potty break, I would have been on pace for a 3:06-3:09 split. I had used one pair of goggles while training for my longer swims. I noticed during training the goggles would feel uncomfortable at around 4000m, but I ignored that because I placed a premium on having a reliable, clear and leak proof pair to use during the race when comfort should have been higher in the priority. During the race at 4000m, they felt like a vise pressing into my eyeballs, prompting six extended stops to adjust them. I should have eaten a better breakfast. I estimated that I only took in 300 calories before the swim. However, during the swim I was spot on by taking in 600 cal (4 PowerBar gels and 1 bottle each of PB IM Endurance formula and water). I usually have a cup of coffee early enough to vacate the bowels before arriving at a race. However, this time I didn't leave enough time to do that, instead opting to have another cup of coffee at race start - resulting in a mid-swim "race" to the toilet at 5200m and losing 14 minutes on my swim time in the process. When I got back into the water, my triceps in both arms seized up because of the strain of taking off and putting back on the wetsuit and the time taken for the awkward "pitstop". For the rest of the swim, I felt I had to hold back for fear of injuring my triceps. I exited the pool like a hung dog - being 3rd to last out of the pool :- ( T1 - 20:41.

### **The Bike - 16:10:31**

I cruised at an easy pace for the first 10 miles on the bike. I picked up the pace a bit when I entered the state park to start the series of 7 mile loops. I powered through the first 6 loops. I had

to stop at one point to readjust my seat height and alignment which was indirectly causing some hot foot issues. Last year went into the race without feedback, e.g., bike& run speed/distance/HR sensors. This time, I made sure they were mounted and functioning and until 132 miles into the race, I was pretty consistent with a 16.7mph moving speed, 88 rpm, 119 bpm averages. By 2pm winds started kicking up a steady 10-15mph with higher wind gusts. These lasted until 6pm.

They weren't as bad as last year, but the cooler temperatures made it feel a bit more uncomfortable. When night fell, temperatures descended into the low-40s and I think I waited a bit too long before throwing a jacket and cycling tights on (although I had an upper body base, bike jersey, bib, wind vest and skull cap on at the start of the race). Around 8:30pm, at 132 miles into the bike, I heard a sickening "pop" follow by a metallic clinking sound. For the first time in any race, I experienced a mechanical issue with my bike - a rear spoke had popped. I opened up the rear break in an effort to get the bike to limp into the crew support area 3.5 miles away, but that didn't help and had to start walking in my socks on the cold pavement. I called Susan on my cell phone and asked her to start walking towards me with my sneakers. Poor thing braved the cold, dark night and we met about half way. She urged me to run ahead to the crew support area to change out my wheel and to get going again. However, I couldn't in good conscience leave her more exposed in the dark with wild boars and walked back together and losing 1.5 hours in the whole process.

Until 150 miles on the bike, I was taking in one PB Harvest Bar or PB Gel Blasts, 1-2 gels, and 1 bottle of PB IM Endurance formula or 1 bottle of water per hour (350-550 calories/hr). But then I started to crave variety and made the tragic mistake of starting to mix in Ensure and pizza into that. The digestive track started to shut down and I promptly started leaving "snack packs" for the raccoons and coyotes on the bike course ;-). After that, I couldn't hold food down and started to bonk and as a consequence my speed dropped to 10mph on some laps. At 3am and 197 miles of the 224 miles of the bike course completed, I decided to withdraw from the race. I learned more valuable lessons and will keep these mind in the future. I must now focus on the upcoming running races: Keys100, May 18-19th; The Great New York 100 Running Exposition on Jun 28-29th; and Pine Creek Challenge 100 on Sep 7-8th.

I want to thank Susan for putting up for hours and hours away from her to train and crew for this event. A hearty thanks to the Hills for having me over and Jim and Kathy for joining Susan and crewing for me. A huge shout out to Steve Kirby, the Florida Double IRON race director, for putting on a great race (with help of all the volunteers). Finally all the members of the Empire Triathlon Club members for your love and support. God bless!