

# 2013 Tampa Double IRON Race Report

## Thomas "the kid" Odom

I arrived in Tampa not really knowing what to expect. I had some ultra runs and iron distance races in the books but this was a new animal. It was good to be going after the goal with some great friends and a great crew. I had set a goal of around 30 hours but being my first race at this distance, I just wanted to finish.

The swim started out about as I expected. As a swimmer, I really didn't train in the pool but figured I should still be close to the front. Within the first half mile, it was evident that myself and Paul Thompson would be the first two out. I hung with Paul for the first hour and he was going strong. I passed once but that was short lived as he went back around me within minutes. He was stronger than me and pulled out of site the second half. I finished up the 4.8 miles second in 1hr 55min, a minute and a half behind Paul.

My transition went smooth, thanks to a great crew, and I was off on my bike! This was uncharted territory for me. I had never ridden over 130 miles but my miles always had long climbs. So what the heck, here goes 224 miles. I felt great and the bike is always my favorite place to be, so I settled into my zone and began



knocking out laps. The front guys flew on by me early but I was doing my own thing and stayed calm. The temperatures were much cooler than expected so a few miles in I was handed arm warmers and wiggled them on as I road. I had set a goal not get get off the bike except for the bathroom breaks and so far all was good! A few hours and ham & cheese sandwiches later I was at 120 miles and averaging 19mph. Feeling good! The miles blurred on...road on and off with folks but maintained 18.9mph through mile 185. It got cold! 40 degrees! As night fell and lights came on, I made an unscheduled stop to throw on my knee warmers! Then things turned. During the last 35 miles my legs felt

great....my stomach, not so much. I was nauseated! I had messed up somewhere and I was paying for it. I'm thinking it was a lack of sodium. It got to the point I was picking spots in the loop as vomit points. I threw up 17 times(nothing better to do than count) those last 35 or so

miles. I was ready to get off the bike and calm my stomach down. My crew tried everything to help me but I couldn't hold down any solid or liquid! I finished the 224 miles with a 17.5 average in 5th place with too many vomit stops!

My second transition was slow. I sat for 15 minutes trying to calm things down but I had to get moving! I was freezing and holding back sickness but I hit the run course walking. It was dark and I didn't want a headlamp so I walked trying to hold 15min/miles until my stomach would relax. I was on the run course alone with the four leaders who looked like gazelles blowing by me knocking off miles. I wanted to run so bad but each time I tried...bad things happened in my stomach. After warming up thanks to some sweat pants and hand warmers I was slowing starting to get moving. The lack of any calories in my body was really messing with my warmth and head. I pounded a half dozen tums and some coke around mile 18 and finally I felt good enough to run. I began to run on and off and got into a much better groove. By this point, the stomach problems had allowed many to gain miles and miles on me! The good news was that a lot of them were my friends and we were able to run on and off together. I was still having issues drinking or eating much without my stomach turning but I was happy to at least feel good enough to run. I was passed early a couple people including Chuck Schultz who was running well! Doc passed me as well while I was walking. During the final 4 miles, Susan Allen blazed by me to win overall female. I finished up at 29hrs 51min in 9th place, just under my goal! I'll take it!



I learned a lot during this race! I have to figure out my nutrition. The training was there for a much better time but nutrition was key! Also, without an amazing crew, I would have been worthless. They were huge in keeping me moving, fed, and mentally stable. The ultra community is so great! The triathlon community is so great! The combination is amazing! My favorite part is the people. Even though I am young for the ultra community, hence why they all decided my name was "the kid", I really fit in. You really get a bond with people when you suffer together! Steve Kirby at USAUltraTri puts on a great race with great volunteers!