

2014 02/28-03/01 Florida Double ANVIL Race Report

Bobby Leong March 5, 2014 at 2:06pm



This Florida Double ANVIL was far more successful than my two other attempts. In previous years, my race had been shortened by hemorrhoids and severe chafing (2012); and a poor nutrition plan and cold weather (2013). In the end, while I fell short of completing the full 281.2 miles of the Florida Double ANVIL – I'm very satisfied with the Anvil + accomplishment completing 261 of those miles.

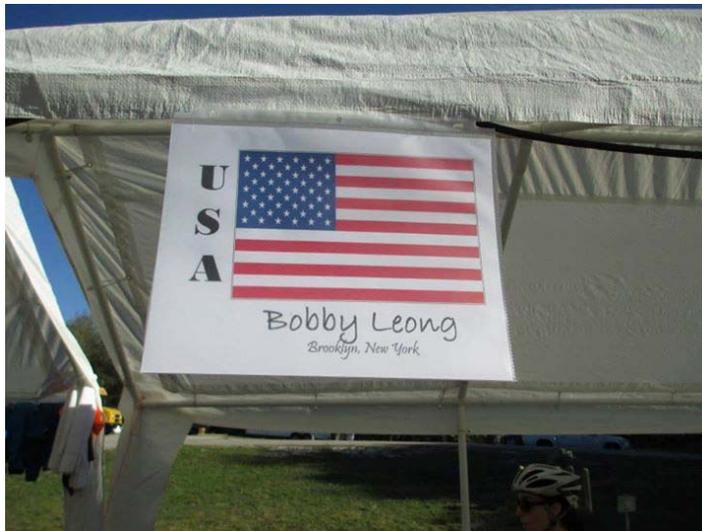
Training:

I invested much more mileage and time in all three disciplines and incorporated many more overnight brick sessions – this paid off very nicely. This time, I incorporated more training at higher efforts (zone 3 and 4) than I had in previous years.

Leading up to the race:

About 3 weeks before the race I began a taper and somehow sustained a knee injury and decided to shut down all running, to hopefully minimize the chances of withdrawing from the race because of an injury. I had invested way too much time and effort to risk that. It turned out to be a smart and successful strategy.

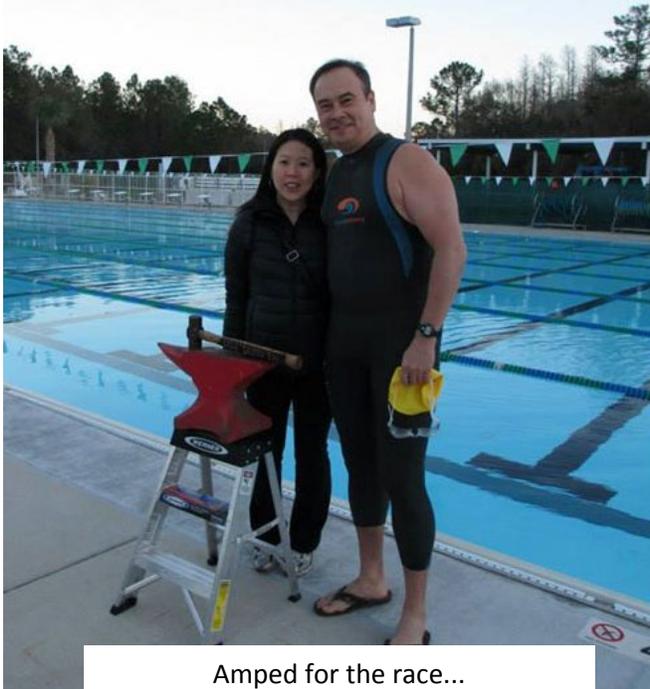
I drove down to Florida on the Tuesday before the race in a rental car to save on the cost of shipping two bicycles (\$1,000). The 18 hour drive had the added bonus of leaving me time to mentally prepare for the long race ahead. I spent Wednesday picking up some race-related equipment that I left behind last year and catching up with old friends from the West Palm area. Later that evening, I drove 3.5 hours to Tampa and got a good night's sleep – much better I might add, than I have had in previous endurance races.



Representing the US of A :-)

I dropped off the bikes to Oliver's Bike shop to have them serviced. I found out that the crank bolt to my Cervelo P3C had a crack in it. The mechanic tightened up the FSA crankset and told me that should last me for the race... but more about that later.

After pre-race check-in and bike set up at the house, I had a great pre-race Italian dinner with the members of my race crew and headed off to bed by 10pm.



Amped for the race...

Swim:

The swim is held at the New Tampa YMCA pool – a gorgeous outdoor, 8 lane pool – every lane had 4-5 swimmers and with 2 volunteers in each lane keeping track of the laps. To complete the required 4.8 mile swim, each racer had to complete 76 laps (or 152 lengths of a 50 meter pool). The race was initiated with the ringing of the Anvil to announce the start of the race, a bit late, at 7:15 am.

I was seeded in the 3:00-3:15 lane. I felt comfortable and confident during the swim and other than some wetsuit chafing issues. The 3:04:43 swim was a vast improvement over last year's 3:29:15, but not quite the 2012 PR of 3:03:12. A few of you may remember that the 2013 3:29 swim included a 15 minute break to run to the toilet to relieve some diarrhea issues and

some extended breaks for the pain inflicted by some horrendously ill fitting goggles (never, ever, ever use new equipment or techniques on race day). During this race, I had a different challenge, my left goggle filled up with water by the 2nd lap and I decided to do the rest of the swim with one eye closed for the rest of the swim.

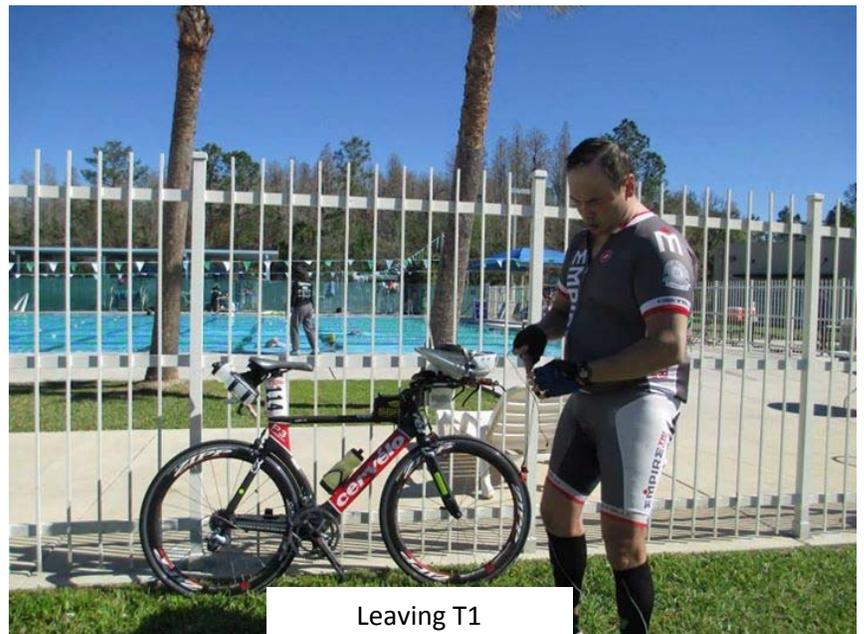
I exited the swim and took about 21 minutes in transition and prepared for the bike leg.

Bike:

See this link for bike data/ 5 mile splits:

http://cyclometer.com/e72716144f56a67f/Cycle-20140228-1039?r=f&fb_action_ids=10202202413036705&fb_action_types=fitness.bikes&fb_source=other_multiline&action_object_map=%7B%2210202202413036705%22%3A463115043788026%7D&action_type_map=%7B%2210202202413036705%22%3A%22fitness.bikes%22%7D&action_ref_map=%5B%5D

After a 21 minute transition, where I took a dive and smack to my chin on the way to YMCA locker room, I headed out to the bike course on my Cervelo P3C tri bike. The course consisted of a traffic light filled stop and go route to Flatwoods State Park (including a short out) and then 31 laps of a 6.88 mile loop inside of Flatwoods.



Leaving T1



One way to get a triathlete's blood pressure going :-)

At swim to bike transition, I dismissed my crew members with instructions to regroup at the bike course crew support area in two to three hours. During my first loop, I noticed the non-drive side crank arm was getting loose – the very issue that the mechanic had warned me about the day before. I put an emergency call out to my crew members (thank goodness I had my Yurbuds hooked up to my iPhone with Siri), who were out getting breakfast, picking up supplies and renting a bike, to get my back-up bike, Cervelo RS, to the race course as soon as possible. I went by the crew area and they weren't there so I decided to go for another loop. As I completed the second loop and passed the timing mat, I dropped my chain and as I attempted to clip out, the crank arm fell off but remained attached to my bike shoe. I walked the bike over to crew area, pulled up a chair, relaxed and waited for 34 minutes for my crew to show up.

After that little hiccup, I rode pretty strongly for about 170 miles (which was about the distance of the longest training rides). Unlike previous years, I minimized the number of

pit stops and made my stays there shorter. In the 2012 edition of the race I averaged 13.33 mph, 2013 - 9.9 mph (completing only 198 miles of the bike) and 2014 -12.98 mph (including 34 minutes of mechanical stoppage– all average speeds include stopped time). It was a psychological boost to see my friend and crew member Erica out on the bike course – offering words of encouragement – stylin' on her black/yellow Trek!

Like last year, the cold was a factor, but I was better prepared for it. I check the historical records for Zephyrhills, FL (http://www.wunderground.com/history/airport/KZPH/2014/2/28/DailyHistory.html?req_city=NA&req_state=NA&req_statename=NA) and temperatures matched the 41 degrees for last year's race. The difference was a lot more moisture/dew in the air this year than last. That really wore on my performance for the last 5-6 laps on the bike. I had hoped to be off the bike between 2-3am to have a shot at completing the race, but didn't get off the bike until 3:45am.

After the bike, I immediately got into the



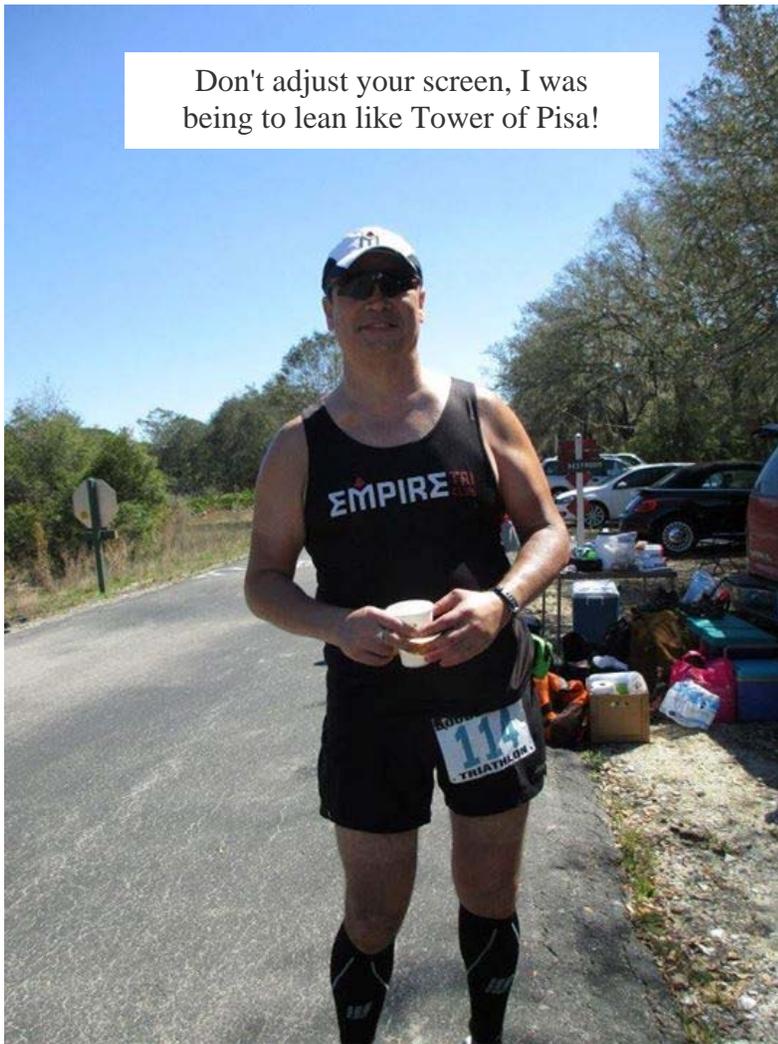
Heading out on the road again....

crew car and napped for an hour in the cozy warmth – I apologize to Susan and Erica for all the snoring and grunting you had to endure.

Run:

See this link for run data/1 mile splits:

http://cyclometer.com/e72716144f56a67f/Run-20140301-0518?r=f&fb_action_ids=10202207701768920&fb_action_types=fitness.runs&fb_source=other_multiline&action_object_map=%7B%2210202207701768920%22%3A1402964916632628%7D&action_type_map=%7B%2210202207701768920%22%3A%22fitness.runs%22%7D&action_ref_map=%5B%5D



The run course was a flat 1.746 mile out and back loop. When I got out of the car, I didn't even bother to change out of my bike clothes and started walking for the first 3 loops until the sun came up. I took my run bag and changed into my run gear at the far end and left a drop bag there for future foot care/lubrication needs. I definitely availed myself to this a few loops later when I took care of some feet issues. Other than that, the run (more like a death march) really was uneventful. I walked the entire "run" course because I didn't want to risk re-injury and employed the run only once – on my last lap for a very short period to play mind games with Vasilis (sorry buddy, I couldn't resist!).

It was huge morale booster to get some words of encouragement from spectators, other racers, and from my crew members along the way. By the 17th mile back spasms started set in and a number of people started to comment on how "crooked" I looked. Still I wanted to reach the "Anvil +" status for having completed the 4.8 mile swim, 224 mile bike and at least

26.2 miles of the run.... So I soldiered on! I was racing for raise money for The Michael J Fox Foundation for Parkinson's disease research and for my firm's (Allen & Overy, LLP) AfriKid's Foundation – so every additional mile counted! I picked a nice round number of 50km (31.4 miles) to stop and called it a day.

Nutrition:

This area was a huge improvement over the previous two years. I decided to strip the nutrition to a few basics. I had 1 water bottle and 1 bottle of PowerBar Endurance Formula with 2 scoops (~70cal/scoop) for the swim portion of the race.



For the bike, I had 3 bottles of my "Ironman Cocktail", each containing 10 scoops of CarboPro (~100cal/scoop) and 8 scoops of PowerBar Endurance Formula. Every hour, I supplemented that with either bars (Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip Harvest Bars ~190cal), or energy blends (apple mango or banana blueberry ~90 cal). Over the course of the bike, I used 4 Enduropacks Amino Recovery transdermal patches, which really helped my perceived exertion levels. During pit stops I munched on Pringles, pretzels, clementines, hot soup or a sandwich. I averaged a bottle of water per hour.

During course of the "run", I took in about 4-5 blends, 6-8 gels, 3 bananas, lots of clementines and watermelon offered by one of the other crew members. I averaged a half of a bottle of water per hour and supplemented electrolytes using Enduropacks concentrated electrolyte spray.

Thanks

Thanks to the many people that made all the training, preparation and my participation in this race possible. First and foremost to my wife Susan, who had to bear brunt of my lonely hours while I went out for 6-10 hour bike rides and 3-5 hour runs – over the course of three years. I couldn't have done it without her love and support.

Thanks to my crew members, past and current James Hill, Kathy Kounnas, Erica Aldin and a recent addition in Greg.

A special shout out goes to Empire Triathlon Club, Charity Miles, The Michael J Fox Foundation and countless other who were a part of my journey. And of course, Florida Double Anvil Race Director Steve Kirby, volunteers, racers and all of their support crews who make this event so special year after year.