

Double Anvil Race recap (long): brought to you by the letter A

Pre-race:

ANXIETY. Tons of it. Drove up to Lake Louisa by myself to check in on Thursday. My amazing crew all were coming in around 7-8pm, so I was on my own till then. Will never forget that as I walked into the building around 2 p.m. where the check in was being held, there was Nurse [Jade Kent-Medders](#) ready to check my hemoglobin levels. Next to her was this young blonde girl keeled over on a table apparently having an adverse reaction to the idea of a blood test. That's my first image of the race weekend... lol. I would later find out this was the amazing youngest ultra tri finisher ever [Laura Knoblach](#) who just does not react well to blood being drawn (but can still rock a 34 hour Double ANVIL race lol).

Checked in, met some peeps, checked out the village and the lake, got the cabin keys for the crew and then headed to the Waterfront Park in Clermont where we had a sports briefing with a Sports Doctor and then the race dinner and race brief.

The sports briefing was informative. But also had some hilarious moments.

Sports Dr. "What do you guys do to recover?"

Us "3-4 mile runs" "Strength training" "What do you mean recover?"

Sports Dr. "These race supplements have mixed reviews. What else would you like to know about?"

[Johan 'Taz' Desmet](#) "What does the medical community think about sleep deprivation?"

The race dinner afterwards was also hilarious. Great, long, speeches from [Steve Alan Kirby](#) the race director. Ate at a table with [Erik Hanley](#) and [Colleen](#) and [John Wilcox](#) and Danielle and their whole crew. There was a lot of good discussion. Erik's famed nutrition plan of Wendy's hamburgers on the bike and fried chicken during the run. And Erik's enjoyment of rented bikes for ultra triathlons because "it's like you just get a new bike every race." Strangely there is some logic in there. Finished eating, I headed back to the cabins, met up with [Aida Ali](#) and went on a fun trip to Wal-Mart to get a bucket, ice, and more frappucinos for the race. Got back to the cabins, made some food prep for the morning, caught some sleep and then...

Race morning.

Pre-swim:

ABOUT TIME

Been waiting for four months for the race, drove over to the village where shelters were set up, said good morning to all and was ready to get in that water. Beautiful rendition of National Anthem by [Katie Hummes](#) and into the water we went.

Swim start: 8:15 am

AROUND AND AROUND (2.4 miles; 3hr 5 min)

My right shoulder was messed up with rotator cuff tendonitis after overtraining a bit before this race and so I had to have a cortisone shot back 3 weeks and had not swam

at all really for 6 weeks. I was concerned about the swim because of this pain I was having. Knew I would overcompensate to my left. But somehow during the swim I just kept about a 2:05 min/100 yd pace the whole time and the pain was minimal. I kept a pace with Bob Abate for a lot of the swim, as he was breathing to his left side and I was breathing to my right. Synced up well. The paddle boarders did ask me to try and stay closer to the buoys. Not sure if it was my directionally challenged swim (or quite possible an animal that starts with the letter A that was spotted in the water that morning).

Finished feeling good and went into T1

T1 19min

ALL ABOARD

Grabbed a bacon egg and cheese sandwich. Drank a frappuccino. The bike was already loaded up by the crew with water in the aero bottle and Infinit in the other bottle I carried. Funny enough as the day moved on, I found coca cola to be the elixir (think [Rj Lakhani](#) taught me that trick once). Got lubed up in my nether parts and was on the bike and off in just about 20 minutes.

Bike: 224 miles; 16hr02min

A LONG RIDE.

Don't even know where to start with this. Started riding at 11:30am. At first I was getting hot quick and figured out I needed cold towels to clean off salt residue on my face and then dry towels, to keep sweat out of my eyes while on the bike. Also had to ride with ice pack in my back to keep cool. I came in off the bike for about 4 solid stops every 50-60 miles or so. During those stops, my amazing crew would top off fluids, check tire pressure, make me eat, throw cold towels on my back... It felt like a NASCAR pit stop but with a crew of 12 people, there was so much stuff being done that sometimes I didn't realize it. I would get on the bike to ride and wonder if my bottles were in need of more fluid, and there would be ice cold something in them. It was awesome. Had some issues with my crank making noises about 50 miles in so we had to put some lube on it. The team started putting on crazy costumes as the sun went down. And blow up animals. That's when I lit up the disco wheels.

Also, think my Garmin was saying each loop was about 110 ft of elevation which if you do that 37 times, that turns into about 4000 ft throughout the day. That's not something to laugh about.

Best part of the bike: Coming through the Village and hearing everyone scream my name. I felt like a rock star (something like 15 times when it was dark). Thanks to all the crews for that. Re-energized every 6 miles.

At about 1-2 am, definitely saw either a wild boar, or bobcat or something cross the road in front of me. Wondered if this was a hallucination but others said they were seeing crazy wildlife out there so I was pretty sure I wasn't quite at the hallucinations point yet.

At about 3:30am I finished up, and rode in for T2

T2: 26 min

ATTEMPT TO POOP

Okay yes this is a family friendly race recap but I've got to get a bit graphic for folks because here's the deal. I am a regular 1-2 bowel movement a day type person. Keep it moving I say. But at this point in the race I have had about 3-4000 calories in my stomach and it was distended, and I hadn't gone in about 24 hours and I knew that I had to try and fix that. Went into the bathhouse and was completely unsuccessful. Sat there thinking if I sit too long I may fall asleep. I guess was going to be running with some stomach distention and that was it. Like carrying a 3 month old baby as I run 2 marathons. Totally fucking normal, right?

So this transition took a little while. Got my running gear on (headlamp, visor, shorts, shoes). Got ready to run (or more correctly run/walk/crawl just keep it moving)

The Run/walk/crawl (52.4 miles; 15hr24min):

ANGRY BIRDS

Okay my buddy Jay who has done one of these had told me to be careful of hallucinations and of letting the mind get to me. As I started to run, my headlamp was making the face of an angry bird and since my head was moving from left to right a bit, it looked as if the angry bird was shaking its head at me saying "no you will not make it through the night". This was most noticeable on the 1 mile asphalt run towards the dark and creepy control burned beach trail we had to skirt through. I even had to ask others if they saw what I saw just to make sure I wasn't crazy. I'm still not sure if others were seeing.

ALL GOOD. I was run/walking the first marathon with about a 15 min pace. Yeah it sounds really slow but I knew I had the time to finish the two marathons even if I walked em at 18-20 min pace, so I was trying to avoid major heart rate increase and lowering my sweating. I would come into the Village each time drenched because of the humidity. I must have had about 4-5 costume changes because then the rain came and then the cooler weather came and before I knew it I was walking miserably with my eyes closing around noon.

Coach [Diane](#) saw this and at noon, let me cat nap for about 3 minutes. I closed my eyes and didn't really sleep. But got up and then kept the mantra in mind "keep it moving" and committed to a fast walk pace to make it happen. Di also had made a plan to have some people out on the course to harass me and remind me of my pace that was needed. This turned into pacing towards the end and eventually into the final lap with all 12 of my crew members walking with me

To top it off my cousin Debbie, Felix, and their son Alexei showed up for the final hour which was perfect. I raced in Felix's honor and to help raise his family some funds while he has been battling brain cancer and also raising a 2 yr old son with autism. Up to the race and the day of we had raised about \$5,000 for his family. After the race Felix had told me two great things I hadn't heard yet: 1) his tumor has shrunk down to half of the original size! And 2) Alexei their son has been talking when at his therapist which has been a huge success for his therapy.

Crossed the finish line at 35hrs 17min. 281.2 miles

Ran it through the village with the AMERICAN Flag and the team.

Strike the ANVIL! AGAIN!

AMAZING. AWE-INSPIRING.

Just want to say to everyone that for me it felt like I was at a summer camp for super humans. Everyone competing was just incredible. The camaraderie. The wanting to see everyone finish. The not giving up attitude. If that could be bottled up and sold it would make billions.

I actually should confess that I remember looking at the resumes of all these people that Kirby puts up on the USA UltraTri page, and before I met any of you i was already in awe of some of what was accomplished by everyone. And then meeting you all and finding that not only were you accomplished race wise but also hilarious, brilliant, humble and in some cases just a tad deranged.. I felt right at home

Want to thank all of you racers and their crews for great support out there. The Race Director and staff and volunteers were all such incredible supporters and made it an amazing experience.

Lastly have to give the biggest shot out to my crew. We were labeled the super crew of the weekend because we were power in numbers. You guys/gals are my family. Whether you were crewing, pacing, whoopee cushioning, hazmat suiting, bacon egg and cheese sandwich making, dancing, sheep decorating, finding me a new girlfriend, whatever you were doing out there.... I cannot say it properly with any of the words known to mankind just how much love I have for you folks: [Diane Calloway](#), [Keith Calloway](#), [Alex Bowen](#), [Kalee Bowen](#), [Pam LeBouef Gonzalez](#), [Peter Gonzalez](#), [Sarah Bloodgood](#), [Heidi Nichols](#), [Aida Ali](#), [Carol Hawkins](#), [Andrew Elliott](#), and [Wesley Ng-A-Fook](#). Every single congrats, message or post I have received is deserved by you all just as much as by me.

and since the recap is brought to you by the letter a, I guess I can leave it with this.

AGAIN?!?