

# Monday, September 20, 2010

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## Revenge at Lake Anna



I had mixed feelings driving down the 2.5 mile road at Lake Anna State Park on check-in night, last Thursday.

We drove past the sign, and a zillion different memories from last October came flying into my mind.

Way more than I expected!

The highs of the bike ride when I finally found my legs at 260 miles in.

The cold nights. The fun and random mix of friends I had crewing for me.

The low of the second night of racing, when I got injured and had to drop.

I continue to be a student of my sport.

One thing is for sure.

You can do ultra running and ultra cycling.

You can do triathlons..but you have to tie the two together before you can actually become an ultra distance triathlete and learn what you need to do to succeed.

9 of us stood on the start line at 7am on Friday morning.

3 of us had plans of Mexico in November. For us, this was just a training day.

The water was flat as glass as we made our way in.

Pretty comfortable temperature.

I settled into a slow pace, chilled out, and got into a rhythm.

I don't do a ton of swim training.

Of the 3 sports, it's the one I enjoy least, and feel has the fewest gains to be had per training time.

Obviously, that will change as I prepare for a 12 mile swim in a couple months. Don't want to be toast after the first discipline in Mexico.

Came out of the water dead last, but really feeling fine. I definitely hadn't wanted to be in the water for over 3 hours, but knew it was coming. Hey, you don't train, that's what you get. I was just happy to feel as good as I felt.

Only a little dizzy from the extended weightlessness of the water.

Changed up quickly, hopped on the bike around 10:45, and immediately went to work. Even though this was supposed to be a "low pressure" race for me, I didn't like being last. My continuous 12 hour ride in the last miles of the bike at the Triple told me I could sit for a long time, so the goal was to not get off the bike for the entire ride.

All was well until around 5pm.

The sun was beating down on the pavement.

It was around 90 degrees...temperatures we haven't seen up north in a while.

One of the racers from North Carolina passed me on the other side of the road and yelled, "What an awesome day for this!"

I yelled an obscenity at him. He laughed, but I wasn't joking. I was suffering.

At the end of the lap, I parked it. Toasted!

Dad and Tina got a big plastic bag of ice and I put it against my chest, hoping it would cool my core. They draped wet cold towels on my head and neck.

After 20 minutes, I was still hot as hell but knew I couldn't waste any more time.

Got back on the bike, made it around the first corner, stopped, and puked for a couple of minutes.

Good times. Chris Trimmer came by, and asked if I was ok. Yup.

Matter of fact, I was all of a sudden feeling great.

I spent the rest of the bike ride feeling pretty awesome. Much like the bike ride of the triple, my last 60ish miles were my fastest on the bike, averaging near 19 mph on some laps.

Parking my bike, I was pretty stoked because I knew I was going to finish the race. I knew I could do a 50 miler in my sleep.

Little did I know at that time that I actually would!

The run was great until around 4 in the morning.

Fatigue was finally setting in big-time, so I asked my Dad to come with me for a lap of the 1 mile out and back course.

We started walking, and the first half mile, it was relatively easy to stay awake.

Towards the turnaround, I staggered a little bit.

After the turnaround, I let Dad lead me, and dared myself to let my eyelids droop a little while I walked.

My head and shoulders were next. Feet shuffled.

Right foot went across my mid-plane and to the left of my left foot.

Next thing I knew, there was a white room with a Jeep door on the wall, and a room of people looking at it as if it were artwork.

I was dreaming, which meant I was sleeping, while walking.

That's a new thing for me.

The whole thing probably took less than 5 seconds until I snapped awake.  
"You ok?" Dad asked.  
I didn't answer, and just staggered as we made our way to the end of the lap.  
Luckily, the sun was coming out.

I went solo the next couple laps, and when the sun finally rose up over the trees, I was alive again. Running.

Hours flew by, and around 11 the sun started getting intense. I was chafing in places I don't care to talk about, and the combination of heat and sleep deprivation made me extremely grumpy. In short, I was fried- both physically and mentally.

The last 3 laps took an eternity. It was like every minute took an hour, but quitting never crossed my mind.  
I remembered laying on the doctor's table last October, right leg wrapped in ace bandage, as Matej from Slovenia finished. His national anthem played and people were going crazy at 5am. I was so depressed that I wasn't going to get that honor after I had trained so hard.

As they say, "What's past is past".  
This was it. I was going to finish for sure. The last 100 meters I forced myself to run, flag in hand. Dad, Tina, and Sarah ran with me for a few meters, then let me have the finish line. The national anthem played, I crossed the line, and it was over. Fantastic!

We spent the rest of the afternoon hanging out and waiting for Paul (an alligator wrestler, seriously) to finish, and talking about the battles we all had.

There really is nothing like the mood swings, consciousness changes, physical beating, and caliber of amazing people that is ultra triathlon. I'm hooked, and can't wait to race Mexico.

Big thanks to Kirb, Nick, Eileen, Dad, Tina, Sarah, and the rest of my support team in Maine and around the country. This would never have been possible if I had tried to do it all myself.

Thanks for reading,  
krp

## CONCLUSIONS

-I need to heat train somehow. There's no way I can endure 5-6 days of what I experienced this weekend.

-I got caught up in "racing" for no reason, a rookie mistake that I knew better than to do. For everyone else, this was their A-Priority race. This was just a long workout, and I forgot that. Had I been a little calmer on my bike, I probably wouldn't have over-heated as bad, and wouldn't have had to stop a couple times. Also, I might have paced the run a little smarter.

-Swim training in the pool needs to happen now. I have to get my mind used to the boredom of an 8 hour swim. Staring at a pool floor!