

# 2014 Virginia Double Anvil Race Report

by

Matthew Smith ~ Monday 20 October 2014 at 12:09pm · Midland, MI

I am going to attempt to write post race report for the 2014 Virginia Double Anvil. Bare with me, most of the race was done "in a fog" and I am not sure I was totally coherent for a lot of the race...The good news is after logging so many miles this year training, it becomes mostly mechanical and allows you to continue on through sleep deprivation.

It started with a conversation with Steve Orsini and Matt Frazier. I can't recall how or actually when the conversation started, but we started getting pretty serious and talking to the race director back in December 2013. This is also when Stevin came into the mix and the "Four DoubleMan" where born....

Researching training for this proved difficult and we all just kind of did what we felt we needed to do mileage wise to get ready. Let's put it this way, if you Google Double Anvil Training Programs, you will get NOTHING! We did find some people that had done it before and had some good conversations with them and we were off and training.

I personally ended up logging 100,000 yards swimming, 3,000 miles biking and 1500 miles running from Jan 1st to race day Oct 10th.

Over the course of the summer we continued to correspond with each other and map out details like what type of lights we would use, to where would we stay and who is going to go crew for us. We also met face to face 4-5 times to make sure we were on track and that helped a lot. I don't think a week went by that we didn't communicate in some way.

Our Crew- Can anyone really say enough about 5 people that took a week off work to come support us and be a part of this? Julie Smith, Tim Strong, Adam SanMiguel, Cam LeFevre and Bill Thompson were the perfect blend of young and old, mechanical knowledge and sports med knowledge. They were tough on us and caring at the same time. They were perfect!

We arrived in Virginia on Wednesday; got checked into the hotel; and grabbed some dinner after a long drive. The hotel had a restaurant/bar attached and they had a specialty drink called the "Dirty Banana". Well let's say it has plenty of booze in it and the four of us decided if we were going to partake of this, it was going to have to be now, because we needed to get serious after tonight. We had a lot of laughs that night - the mood was light and we had a blast.

Thursday we rolled into the race venue and spent some time watching the Triple athletes finish their swim and head out on the bike. We now had a real feel for what was about to happen...lol. We made plans, grocery shopped for last minute things and then got our crew area set up on "Tent Row" If you're not sure what that is, go to my picture album and you can get a visual. We did checkin, got our timing chips and got drug tested. Then had really long athletes meeting of which I'm still not sure what Kirby said at all (Sorry Steve Kirby) except that we were starting at 7:00 am. Off to the hotel and tucked in for a good night of sleep at about 9:00 pm.

Friday morning the alarm goes off and you feel your butt pucker HARD. I got up and made my oatmeal and started getting some fluids in and we drove to the venue.

The Swim (4.8 miles) - We all know I don't swim very well, so to say I was nervous is an understatement, but I also knew come hell or high water I would get through it. We took pre race pictures, got last minute instructions; I gave Julie a kiss and walked into the water to start the race. The course is .4 miles and we had to do it 12 times to get 4.8 miles total (5.25 miles by my Garmin) My plan was to take a sip of water with Tailwind in it each lap and take a gel on lap 3, 6 and then a can of Ensure on lap 9. This worked out really well and I felt like I was ahead of the nutrition game early and ready to bike. The last 2 laps were excruciating for me because my neck and shoulder were killing me. This has always been an issue and I was mentally ready for it to hurt. I was so glad when I reached the last buoy and stood up to come out of the water!!!! Time was 3hours 36 minutes and I was 23rd out of 25 out of the water.

The Bike (224 miles) - This is where the war begins. It didn't help that it started raining either. I guess they said it rained a total of 19 hours during our race and most of it was on the bike portion and in the dark. If you've ever ridden through the day and into the night you will understand this is a mind game. You start getting mentally fatigued and the rain just trying to squash you even further. I am not sure what the elevation gain/lost was, but it was significant to say the least. I was running Tailwind in my front aero-bottle and then eating bananas, pop tarts, peanut butter and grilled cheese sandwiches. Nutritionally I felt good. I did fall asleep once on the bike around midnight and went off the road, but luckily I got the bike slowed down without crashing and regained my composure. This is also when I started to take in Caffeine every 3 hours through the rest of the race. I remember a high point when my Garmin hit 200 and I knew I was almost done with the bike portion. Time on the bike was 16 hours 04 minutes.

The Run (52.4 miles) - So I get off the bike and I am HAPPY! I take off running and get about 5 miles in when my body realizes what's going on and I fall asleep on my feet. This is pretty common out there at this point. People are weaving around like zombies, but just keep pushing forward. I stumbled off the road and then took a wrong turn and a guy stopped me and I had no idea where the heck I was. I made it back to our crew area and told Julie "I need 10 minutes ", this was about 5:00 am Saturday and I had been racing non-stop since 7:00 am Friday. I laid down and fell right asleep. Julie woke me up 10 minutes later and I popped right up and took off again. The rain continued off and on



all day which made choosing clothing hard. One minute your hot, the next your freezing and soaked again. But hey, who said a Double Anvil was going to be easy? I think my nutrition was good again and I continued the grilled cheese, PB, Banana regimen. I also drank some Ensure and had some snack size candy bars. Time running was 14 hours 07 minutes. Total time: 34 hours 17 minutes.

Did I achieve my goal? Close....I really wanted to be under 34 hours (there is a 36 hour cutoff) and I was just 17 minutes off that, but I did finish strong and in the top half of the field and with no injuries (besides really sore tendons). I have no regrets and probably would not change much about my nutrition or training at all.