

Vasilis Toxavidis

2014 Triple Anvil 421.8 Race Report

Where do you start trying to convey a race report of epic proportions? Especially when your memory fails you for 90% of the bike leg?

7.2 mile swim

We gathered in the morning and had the obligatory picture session before the start of the race. I recall feeling calm, relaxed and thinking to myself this is going to be one loooooong swim?

The start was announced by Kirby and off we went. My plan was to find my slowest most comfortable pace and keep at it no matter what. At the first 10 or so laps was close by with Mosi and we kept checking on each other.

At the end of every loop I'd drink spiz and my hydration and nutrition was on target and never felt fatigued. My sighting though was horrible and I blame it for probably adding another 45 minutes to my swim.

The whole ordeal was monotonous and I did a lot of meditation to keep my sanity intact for the 6 hours. Only issue was when Brad plowed into me at one point and his goggles dug into my eye socket causing me significant pain, nothing major that a few ibuprofen couldn't fix. Around lap 12 or so out of 18 Todd asked me how I was feeling and my answer was .. Are you f#€% kidding me ...

So off the swim and off to change clothes and get on the bike. Donna Pruett had brought me a pizza and I was soooooooooooooo very happy to indulge. Though for whatever reason Todd was trying to not let me have more than 3 slices., not sure why..... Dude I just swam 7.2 miles back off from my food grrrrrr ... LoL :)

336 mile bike...

Well this is where it gets interesting....

The Choice to use the road bike with the aero bars and ISM saddle was Money! I was so comfortable I wanted to high five my fitter (thanks Joe!) Then things get weird.....

I only can recall a very few snippets of riding 336 miles. I recall telling John and Todd and Lisa that my body was fine and strong but my head was foggy, over and over again! Then my right shoulder was hurting and I was having migraines.

Todd did some physio on me and reiki and I felt better. No idea at what mile I got off the bike and laid down stating the fogginess and migraine was too much. All of a sudden Ryan Ravinsky's dad comes over and takes my blood sugar and I was hypoglycemic. I had juice and food and problem was rectified...

Another thing I recall from the bike is that it was cold and raining, but I really enjoyed that weather ...only because all my races this year have been like that, so...

My feet though were soaked and freezing...the word misery comes to mind when it comes to them. But still not bad, not bad at all; the bike was comfy and the course was so enjoyable.

I remember seeing Andrei doing the bike still from the Quintuple race and Frank running and was thinking to myself...fu\$@& MTFU and get this done

Then out of the blue John produces a sign Finishing is your only f\$&@ing Option per Thors directions..... brilliant !!

I also remember 20 or so hours into the race asking for a break for an Hour nap and Todd wouldn't allow more than 20 mins... In retrospect I should have listened to myself and slept for an hour... Potentially it would have saved me hours on the bike.... But Todd had his orders from me and enforced what I had asked him....

John on the other hand was my go to guy for everything from food to meds to clothesI mean these 3 had my life in their hands so to speak....

So around mile 200 and stupid of the bike (280 or 290) I sat my rear down and declared I wanted to stop. I have nothing to prove and I was done.... Donna, John, Melodi, and Lisa all tried to talk sense into me, and it wasn't until Dave said "hey get on the bike go 400 yards see how you feel and then decide to stop or not that it clickedso on to the bike and Kamil stopped by and said to try bananas and black tea with honey...

Well it worked and the bike was done ...ride time 23 hours total time 35 hours (don't stop when racing it adds up.... Will I ever learn?)

78.6 mile run

Off the bike, and I was desperate for some sleep. I had been up for 40 plus hours... So I decided to nap for 2 hours....

Lisa suggested to first go do a lap of the run and then nap... Great advice! 2.5 hours later John was waking me up and Kale was texting me to get my a\$\$ in gear and start running...

I grab pancakes and sausage that was served for breakfast and was running effortlessly ! I was talking with people and encouraging whomever I thought needed help...(not hard to spot at an ultra), I was excited to see that the people I tried helping got their second wind and were rocking it....

10 laps in/about 20 miles, I realize that I'm not going to make cut off for official time, but it's ok ! I've decided to finish no matter what. Talked to Kirby (after talking to my crew) and got the Ok to continue. We were given a timer to record my laps and off I went along with Brad to finish what we had started.

Not for a minute during the run did I think of not finishing, not once. Hours went by and Lisa joined me overnight to keep me fed, medicated and safe. (I can't thank Lisa enough for this as well as John). Around 10 or so o'clock at night Saturday night car stops and Kamil came out and offered words of encouragement and support.... Huge moral booster that was!

The hours went by and the miles piled on....then I realize that I had left for 10 hours my IT strap on my calf (it had cramped) and by doing so it had acted as a tourniquet and my left leg had swollen to the size of my thigh... NUTS !! No matter fiyofo. I had to see this through for myself, my crew, my friends, for Kirby, for John Wall, for Malia, for my parents, and especially my kids. You always finish what you start, and it's not supposed to be easy. Nothing in life that's worth something is easy.

And so the night went on and became dawn. The faces on the asphalt went away (hallucinations) and the daylight brought energy... It's Sunday and I've been racing since Thursday 7am... Nuts !

All of the sudden B L I S T E R S ~ we are talking pain, excruciating pain, painfully painful pain, like walking on razor blades and glass. So of course Lisa quoted Wayne Kurtz.... Blisters should never be a reason to quit a race...thanks Lisa, thanks Wayne, I was not planning on Quitting but I was doing 26 min miles or more...wtf!

And then Kamil shows up...and breaks it down for me and explains what I was doing wrong, trying to run with blisters and how it was better to walk long strides. He did 2 laps with me. The pain was excruciating but what he showed me enabled me to walk 15 min miles which saved me hours in the long run. It's not every day you have a world champion pacing you ... ;) I also recall seeing David Jepson and him offering encouragement and that was huge for me as well....

Unfortunately Lisa had to leave before I finished the race, but I owe her tons of gratitude for her selfless support and encouragement. The lap before last I did myself, alone.....and was emotional and tearful. John joined me for the last lap. Then a car pulls by and Hoskuldur Kristvinsson (Triple finisher) steps out he can hardly walk and he says to me if you can do this for 79 hours I can walk with you to the finish line... And Paul Bedard pulls over, gets out of his car and also walks with me..and a few others I can't recall names.... And Ironox with Donna are there and the gang from Michigan... There's a lot of people... I wasn't expecting to be there...and the banner is up and the Greek national anthem is playing on Donnas phone ...

79 hours 50 minutes FOUR HUNDRED TWENTY ONE POINT EIGHT miles of pain suffering and joy DONE.

One the things Wayne said to me stuck with all along the race

"Get to that finish and remain "in the present" no matter how tough it gets."

It was not easy. It was not fast. It was not pretty. But I did finish it... Thank you Todd, Lisa, and my boy Blue John!

And even though usually I'm like...never again... I really can't wait to do this again !

God bless and thank you for all the support!