


When I was looking at the Tri talk website a thread was created to announce this new race, it is fair to say that it caught the imagination of quite a few people on there.....so I was thinking "mmmmm that could be a really good day out" and yes its not too far away and those lads from Trihard usually put on a fantastic race.....and at £45 who could say no!!!

So I entered in Jan this year and was to use the experience a good prep for IMUK

Friday

I had booked off the Friday and Monday, with the plan to get up there and get myself into the B&B I was staying in just outside Pooley Bridge and only a mile or two to where the Registration, transition and start of race would be. Perfect. So not a lot done Fri apart from a nice meal oh with a pint of Black Sheep Bitter (Nice). Then sleep.....

Saturday

It was another hot sweltering day and I needed to make sure I was fully loaded with water and with carb drink all day. I decided to take a quick hr spin out on bike checking a little of the route, how my chaffing issue was coming on and if bike was ok. Well had a nice big fat fry up with black pud(Yum). Issues with bike delayed my start time but got out and covered 17 miles in the Hr. Bike ok a few little issues and chaffing ok. Thank God. Off into town for a quick hair cut and a little look in local bike shop, 1. To remedy few bike issues and 2. To buy last minute nutrition stuff. Nice big lunch had with an awesome carrot and orange cake. Oh I love the eating before a hard race. Then it was a recce of the bike course in the car. I gulped audibly when I got my first look at Kirkstone Pass snaking its way into the stratosphere but as I drove it I became convinced it wasn't too bad. That was up until the last 500m of it where it pitched into a much tougher gradient. "That'll hurt" was my only assessment. 

The rest of the course looked fine and Shap Fell seemed a piece of cake in the car - this is why car recces are far from ideal!



Sunday - Race Day:

Race day was a little too well organised and I had loads of time to spare, not like me. Well you will be glad to know I nearly missed the hooter for the swim. Wouldn't be race day for me if I was not like this. I was in the 2nd out of 3 waves. Wave 1 under 30 mins, wave2 30-35 and wave3 35+.....my plan was to be as economic as possible....not to think about or worry what anyone else was doing, but to concentrate on my stroke....the result was fairly decent. 33 Mins and I overtook a lot of Wave 1 think they lied about there times. Apart from a little panic period half way thru where I just took a funny turn and had to roll over onto my back and chill for a few second, well minute. Exit from water ok. Happy

SWIM: 33mins:

So into T1, no major probs really, was not to sure what was gong to happen wit the weather. General pic below of Transition area.



Anyway headed out of T1 on to the bike. Bout 14 miles around the lake, towards the big climb of the day - the Kirkstone Pass: I was hoping to get as close to a 3hr bike as I could even on this ridiculously hard course. Kirkstone Pass below a nice 20%



I maintained a good 18mph for this part of the course and overtook a good few though when the ARMY guy passed me I had to return the favour this was to happen for a good part of the course until when he decided to overtake 2 cars when I was deciding to turn right. It knocked him off, he was ok though so I settled got into a nice pace going up the hill, but was having a mechanical and could not get into my smallest gear which I so needed. By the last steep bit I was starting to sweat in the heat and feeling it a little.....I was controlled.....but then I got to the top and fairly hammered it down.....overtook all in my sight (in the place that it was safe to and there wasn't many). Thank god the 1st major climb done. Avg speed well and truly gone down now.

The roads then meandered over towards Shap Fell and the long climb up there the heat was starting to take its toll and my water was running out, I was trying to eat but just did not feel like it(MISTAKE),at the top were people pom-pomming away and the cow-bells were a-clattering !!!! Great atmosphere!!!!

So for me.....bimble up the hill and hammer it downwards and again I took loads and loads before it started to flatten out a trick I had heard about and was trying it for the 1st time. The rest of the bike passed without incident, but the heat was turning up a notch and the sun was out, I started to feel the effects of this so got some food and gel till before it was too late. Well you guessed it..... Too late. My pace was slowing down considerably, but was still at 18mph Avg. Anyway I got back to T2 not to sure how I was feeling.

BIKE: 3hrs 10mins

I'm not sure where to start with this Fell run but it was horrific. I started off at a steady pace cracking a few jokes with others and got some more water and gels in to set me up.

The next two hours were simply purgatory - the clouds parted and the sun shone down hard.....about 2-3km into the run was the 1st sight of what was to come off the beaten track in the Lakes and looking at a good incline. I did not walk up this though like many others. In hindsight maybe I should have, as the path flattened and levelled off I thought great but - I just couldn't handle the sun and was sweating hard.....I was fine in the shade and could run ok, but as soon as the sun shone I was like "Woody" in Toy Story when the little boy comes back in the room and he just freezes.....I knew I had to keep eating and drink and knew I had a bout 3 miles to go till 1st feed station, I got to the first aid station and drank well and stood in the stream and chucked the water all over myself, it was just so hot, set off but saw the sheer mountain ahead of us and just thought bowlocks to that.....that isn't a run course, that's what mountaineers do and I am

not one of those....I am going to pack it in.....wait, no I am not, not after coming this far, yeah I am, no I am not, yeah I am, not I am not"....oh stuff it...and on I went....the climb was steep and hard.....and it was here that the ARMY guy took me, passed me looking good - I was still talking to myself about how crap the sun is and why the hell was I half way up a mountain.....time for a get my head together, this was spoilt when wonder woman came flying past me, yes just a bikini on a tight female body that was part of a relay, a great pick me up but also a real downer that I could not go that fast. This lead to more banter with other athletes and more talking t myself.....eventually after what seemed an age I got to the top(Oh I walked but so did every one else) and there was a lovely stream with water as clear as you could imagine...."is this drinkable" I asked a marshal....."well everyone else has" was the reply, which wasn't really a yes or a no, but I took a full handful and poured it over my head before heading on the descent....the view were stunning...simply WOW !!!!

The descent was a killer as well, very technical and hard on the legs, and I was really starting to feel it now I reckoned I was about 7 miles in to the run, I was getting overtaken by a far few by now but kept telling myself to hang in and just keep going. I managed to pass the ARMY guy again, dancer, he was gone, but so I was I to be honest, but made it to the second aid station along with 4 or 5 others..... how we feeling lads"....."sheeete", "rubbish", "crap"....."how long left" were the answers.....the cheerful marshal (aren't they always cheerful ?) said oooh about 3.5 miles and its all flat.

Well I suppose it was flat compared to Kilimanjaro we had just been up and down, but it was still up and down.....me and many others decided to run/walk the last bitThe Ironman shuffle it was a few mins on a minute off, the heat was just so hot, my legs were not working and I desperately wanted to finish, by now I was at the 6hr point my goal time. As I approached the finish inside the campsite the crowd really helped and I managed to cross the line in 6hrs 18 looking reasonably good.

RUN: 2hrs 30mins (a death march)

TOTAL TIME: 6Hrs 18mins

I was hoping for a time of 6:00 but had no idea as I didn't know the course at all, well the run. So my finishing time of 6:18 is just about where I thought I might be and but for the heat/sun would have been 15-30mins quicker I think.....

For me, the heat made the race as hard as any I have done and when you see all the other comments on Tri Talk and hear every one else making comments that it is the hardest HIM they have ever done, you realise what you have achieved and what that race was all about.

Time for a couple of days off now, but if you want a race to challenge your senses, and your strength, then get yourself along to A Day in the Lakes 2010.....but you probably wont see me there !!!! (Or will you?)
