

Double Iron Uk 2009

Just over a year ago I signed up for the double and what a bargain £150 for two ironman races how could anyone resist anyway I thought well its over a year away so will have plenty of time to train. At this point id already signed up for IM Germany and decided that would be a prep race before going into the double. Over the winter I spent most of my time swimming and running and found myself running marathon distances after a days work to get home, so after months of training and racing here I was at the start of my biggest journey....

With 72 of some of the most experienced ironman athletes around here I was the youngster of the group standing poolside at 4.30am waiting for my wave to go at 9.30am. There wasn't the usual hustle and hype from an ironman race but more of a death march as I watched other athletes getting ready and the solemn looks on everyone face. So 9.30 soon rolled in and I said my good byes well for the next few hours anyway. I headed to my lane and met the other to guys who id be doing battle with over the next 304 lengths, we seeded ourselves and I went to the back to draft of course....after 4 lengths I found myself at the front and setting the pace but after an hour id already lapped everyone in my lane so many times so decided time for a gel an a few salt tabs. As the swim continued I could see other athletes getting pulled from the pool and having buckets of water threw around them to stop them over heating. On the two hr mark the first guy was out and shortly after another guy had followed, at 2hr 17mins yours truly was third out but didn't realise I could run outside to run over the timing mat to clock my time but even with going into the changing rooms to change(forgot to pack a towel and some guy stripped of his t-shirt for me to dry off) I still had a time of 2hr 26 which was 4th quickest of the day but this was only a small part of a long journey....

So now 224 mile bike or 16 14 mile loops..simple....after the first 2 loops I pulled up for a bite to eat and my old favourite Redbull....so now out on the 3rd loop and the rain started then the thunder and lighting storms so now moral was very low and now having to stop every loop to put dry clothes on with the fear of hyperthermia setting in that could ruin everything....so this went on for about 9hrs and my support crew where flat out trying to keep the flow of dry clothes coming....as the hours went by it soon began getting dark and we were told to get our lights on and hi-viz vests as not to get mowed down by the traffic. At 170-180 mile or in around 3am I hit an all time low, I came in and my crew had hot dogs made up for me...yum yum...I sat down and started eat and after the first bite my body just wanted close down and sleep and even when chewing I was falling asleep and at this point I said I never want to go through this again, I just kept saying 5 minutes just another 5 minutes, so after a few 5 minutes I was up and away again with 3 loops to go, at this stage a very thick blanket of fog had set in making it very cold so once again in for one more change, after 17hrs41 and 2.5hrs of for stops my 224mile ride was over.... O.my butt.....

So after crossing the timing mat from the bike my run time had started, well it may have but I wasn't so decided to go and lay down for a while after i'd told the race director, incase they thought id collapsed somewhere....went in to see my crew who had beat me to it as they were all laying snoring away and looking pretty tired so I left them to it, not sure how long i'd lay down either but at 7.30am I was now out starting

the 52 mile run or 42 1/2 mile and a quarter laps through the Blair Witch forest which each lap started with a climb up the Devils stair case which was logs built into the hill which consisted of each step getting higher the higher you went and lots of mud to spice things up.....I had 10 laps done by the time my crew had go up to see how I was going and at this stage I was feeling good so just plugged away and got a marathon done before stopping to have a massage, so back out a again and tapping away at the laps and finally getting into single figures and at this stage going through the transition area everyone knew who you were and were all encouraging you along so now the final lap had come the one that seemed so far far away was now just over a mile away and now I had a case of runners high and felt like id a new set of legs on as I made my way round the final lap which you ran the opposite way from the 41 previous laps so that everyone still on the course knew you were on the glory lap and they would all high fived you and congratulated you, so now with 20 meters to go I waved my crew to come over to run up the finish shoot with me as this was their moment to of glory as well as mine because if it wasn't for their had work through the race I may never have made it when times were low. So we linked hands and ran the last piece of the race together and after 33hrs 10mins and 36th overall the Double Iron adventure was over.

So a big big thanks to my crew, Mum Florence, niece Courtney and last but not least girlfriend Grace....thanks I couldn't have done it with out yous xx