

Charleston Triathlon Sprint Series, 4 races (.3 mile swim, 13 mile bike, and 5K run) from Bill Rich (male 48)

Pre 6/15/03 Triathlon weekly training (my last bike and swimming was recreational as a teenager)
Bike Training: 35 miles, once a week. (started 3/16) - Swim training: 1 hour, 3 times a week (started 5/8) -
Running: 3 times a week, 25 total miles

6/15 Triathlon: Arrive 6 AM for 7:15 start of my first ever Triathlon. 1 mile warm-up run. 3 groups (All Elites, 30 to 34 men, and 35 to 39 men) start before me, 3 minutes apart. My group (41 to 49 men) is fourth followed by 21 to 29 women. Only objective on the swim - DON'T DROWN. At the gun I take off as slow as I can in the back and out of the way. I stay very comfortable and notice I pass at least one of the 30 something guys that started 3 minutes before me, I also notice at least one woman passes me that started 3 minutes behind me! I'm out of the water with a happy 12:49 and headed to my bike. I stumble around, get the wetsuit off, my biking stuff on, and take off. I feel pretty good and I'm hoping for a 20 mph average on the bike. My first few miles are good, I pass a few bikes, and get passed by a few. All of a sudden a steady stream of 21 to 29 women start passing me one at the time. I'm only averaging 18.8 mph, but I'm saving some for the bike finish. Last half of the bike and I start going all out and manage to get my average up to 19.2 mph. I come up on the transition area too fast and realize I have to get off my bike, I drag the brakes and forget to clip out of the pedals and fall over in the transition area! After scraping my ankle on the sprocket, I manage to get off the bike and get on my running shoes and take off on the part of the race I know about. Well, somebody forgot to tell my legs they knew how to run! The tops of my legs felt like watermelons pumped full of Novocain! The first mile was 9 minutes and it didn't get much better (8:17 avg). I finished with a 1:21:54 (74% from the top of my age group).

Pre 7/6 Triathlon weekly training

Changed bike to 3 days weekly (60 total miles) - Swimming 4 days, 6 hours total - Running, 3 days, 30 miles total

7/6 Triathlon: More confident on the swim, I take off a little faster, well maybe a lot faster, 100 yards into the swim and I can't get my breath! I start dog paddling and floating on my back every 100 yards or so to get my panic stricken lungs to cooperate. I finally struggle in and see that I'm 16 seconds slower than the first race. I run to my bike, get changed a little faster and off down the road. Decide to take it a little easier and save something for the run. Feeling good again at 3 miles when along comes the same pack of 21 to 29 women zipping by me like I'm tied! Only average 18.7 mph (57 seconds slower than the first race). The run start is not as painful as the last but I know I'm in the hole as far as time goes and almost decide to walk part of the run, but when I get to the first mile marker I realize my run is better (7:40 avg). Even with the slower swim and bike, I manage to come in 1:19 faster with a time of 1:20:43, but I drop in my age group to 76 % from the top!

Pre 7/27 weekly training

Same number of days per week but pushed my weekly bike mileage up to 85 and my running to 35, kept my swimming the same.

7/27 Triathlon: Tried to find a happy medium between slow swimming and flat out and managed to improve my swim by 1:08. Pushed the bike a little harder to a 19.8 avg and managed to slow the onslaught of the 21 to 29 women until about 10 miles into the bike. Finish the swim/bike 3:01 faster than last race, improve the run to 7:39 avg and finish 3:16 faster overall with a time of 1:17:27 and jump to 44 % from the top of my age group!

Pre 8/10 weekly training

Kept mileage and time the same, but started running a few miles after each bike ride to get the feel of the transition.

8/10 Triathlon

Didn't think I could do much better than the last race but I had met a similar competitor (Bill Wizeman) that finished one minute behind me in the last race (his first triathlon) and decided that a little competition

would pull me faster. I had only beat him by 4 seconds in the last swim, so when I came out of water this time and was 1:30 faster, I knew I had him! As I ran to get on my bike I noticed he was already in the transition area changing! I had a pretty fast transition, jumped on my bike and took off standing up in the pedals. I decided to go for my original 20 mph average goal and got up to it immediately. I thought it might affect my run but I convinced myself to let the run take care of itself. I cranked as hard as I could and managed to pull out a 20.1 mph average and figured Bill Wizeman was behind me. I was in the transition area changing to running shoes when it hit me that not one 21 to 29 woman had passed me, I looked at my watch and realized I was 3 minutes faster than the last race and was pretty sure Bill was behind me. I took off with a packet of my new found electrolyte replacement (Emergen-C), and stopped at the first waterstop to mix and drink it. A woman behind me thought I was quitting and said "Don't stop, you can make it!", I realized she was the first 21 to 29 woman to catch me. I immediately took off and got ahead of her to stay. The run felt pretty good (as good as can be expected in these things) and my first mile was 7:30. The confidence was building that Bill was behind me on my PR triathlon. In the last 1/4 mile on an out and back loop, I saw him about 20 seconds ahead of me. In the spirit of the "gentlemanly manners" of the Tour de France, I called out to him, "Pick it Wizeman, I'm coming to get you". Of course he picked it up (he improved his overall time by 5:06) and I finished about 5 seconds behind him (7:18 avg) with a new PR of 1:13:25, a 4 minute improvement over the last race and an 8 minute improvement over the first race!. I was pretty happy with my improvement until I saw the final results on the website that had me 56 % from the top of my age group, down from the last race! I guess it goes to show you're only as good on any given day as the competition you face.

Overall finish position: 1st race, 63% from the top -- 2nd, 46% -- 3rd, 44% -- 4th, 33%

All in all it was a great experience and I recommend it to anyone that is willing to give up their social life and train 20+ hours per week! Bring on the IRONMAN!