

NZ Half Ironman Champs – Tauranga

Heading up to Tauranga for my first NZ pro race the nerves were definitely kicking in. I had a lot on my mind and wasn't sure if I had made the right decision entering. I should have been focusing on the race and feeling confident with the training I had done. That was my first mistake. Once you commit to doing a race, nothing else should matter. Give it your all and don't look back!

Race morning was quite overcast and drizzling. This didn't bother me much as although while at work I sit with the heat pump on max most days, my pasty white skin much prefers racing in the cooler climate.

The Pro field started 2minutes ahead of all the age group men and then all age group women were 2minutes behind them. With over 1000 competitors racing, by the second lap of the swim it was a whirl pool and quite chaotic. I got a huge smack to the nose towards the end of the second lap but you get use to that after a few races.

Out of the water and on to the bike, I had a pretty slow transition. I seem to have a habit of always mucking around with what I want to take out on the bike. Note to self: must remember it is not a fashion parade! I found myself passing people quite quickly but also getting swallowed up in huge masses of age group men who were "working as a pack". This was frustrating as it was hard to get in to a good rhythm. They do not seem to like sitting behind a girl. Heading in to the second lap of the bike things were quite messy with people bunching up and slowing with a few judder bars and corners (I myself am hopeless at corners so was getting passed by the millions). Starting to settle in to the second lap feeling great and then o no everything was about to change. A freight train of men passed me and pulled in right in front of me, before I had even a chance to pull back the technical official motorbike was there, whistle, card, next penalty box 3mins!

Great I thought! This is just what I need. I am not a fast runner or swimmer for that matter so biking is where I try to make up ground and that is pretty hard to do standing on the side of the road. Any way off to the box I went. I stopped but didn't realise you had to have both feet out so a bit of time fluffing there before my time actually started. Being a novice at this penalty thing I wasn't really sure what to do! 3 minutes is definitely a long time when you see bike after bike whizzing past you. I was luck as no females rode past in that time. Right back on my bike fuming, and wondering what on earth had just happened I was heading fast towards the finish. Well at least I thought I was until Gordy rode past me like I wasn't moving☺.

Heading out on to the run I knew that I was meant to only be running at half iron man pace to save my legs for Challenge Wanaka which is next Saturday. But I was still mad from hanging out on the side of the road that I ran at a faster pace. I was passed by Hannah Lawrence who is a fantastic runner but was still feeling ok so kept pushing myself. Passing a couple of women I ended up 3rd across the line. My run had to be the best part of the day with a time of 1.30 which is the fastest I have ever run a half marathon, within a half ironman or stand alone.

A big ups to Joanna Lawn and Cameron Brown for taking the top honours. Both outstanding athletes and people to aspire to in this sport.

Right 8 days to Challenge Wanaka. Time to recover, relax and get pumped to race again on New Zealand's most scenic triathlon. Lets hope for less wind this year, or not, everyone loves a challenge.

www.challenge-wanaka.com

Cheers Tams