

Parry Sound Half Ironman



When it was announced that the Parry Sound Half Ironman would be the Ontario Long-Course Championship, and thus a qualifier for the 2007 ITU Long-Course Triathlon World Championship – to be held in France (the second week of the Tour!!) – I knew I had to re-arrange my race schedule to include this competition.

It was nice to race in Ontario – I think that the last time I did was in 2004. A bit of traveling was still involved, and an overnight stay at a local hotel – but with many of my friends and training partners also racing it was really a great time.

Luckily for us, the race director had redesigned the run course from previous years and had taken out two difficult hills – I guess enough complaining can really make a change! I was looking forward to discovering the run course, as my race-site recon. that I'd done earlier in the month hadn't included scouting it out.

Race morning was pretty understated. Everyone at the race-site seemed to be very relaxed, and the atmosphere was casual – I guess in comparison to an IM morning it felt this way.

The swim was a deep(ish) water start, for a two loop triangular course. It was so nice not to be totally crowded, and I didn't have to worry about other competitors' feet causing a repeat of my rib issue that I had at IM Cd'A. I did though have some feet in my face, as I was able to get into place behind my speedy swimmer friend Chris Young (who had forgotten his wetsuit! No issue – he still had a great swim – thanks Chris!).

T1 went really well and I was out onto my bike in 36 seconds!!! Just as I was leaving transition, Chris passed me (I guess my super fast T1 helped a bit there) – and was GONE!! The first section of the bike I had ridden during my earlier trip to Parry Sound, so the rough roads and hilly sections were easy. Once onto the highway though I was concerned about the 'cottage-traffic'. Luckily, traffic was light, and I didn't encounter any problems. Passing me before the turn-around was Dan Moore – competing in his last race pre-baby arrival. Judging from Chris Young's speedy races, there are post baby improvement for men's performance as well as women's – something to look forward to Dan!!

I was able to catch Kim before the turnaround. She stayed with me (at a legal distance!!) and we were able to cheer for each other at the turn around. Of course, I also spent some energy cheering for Tara who was, as always, riding hard!

The Parry Sound bike course has a lot of rolling hills, and so I tried to take advantage of the 'free-speed' on the downhill sections. That being said, it was great to get back into town, and off the bike.

It was a huge surprise to see my friend Doug as I started the run...looking uber fit after a trip to Germany, and lots of cycling!!! Fun too to have Tara's hubby Bruce working the aid station, and giving some extra encouragement!!

The run course was a lot of fun – can you believe I'd actually ever say that about a run!! Most of it was on hard packed dirt trails that gave relief from the sun, and to the knees. The double out-and-back also provided 4 chances to gage your placing, as well as see all of your buddies!

I could tell that I was closing in on the woman in front of me – but could I catch her before the end of the race....well, I just kept running as hard as I could. It was in the last out and back section that I saw my target walking up a hill, and then she started to run again...I just kept working, and caught her at the crest of the hill. From then on I ran scared all the way to the finish line.

A finish in 5:02:21 gave me first place in my division, and second amateur woman overall. I also earned my first race pay-cheque by placing fourth woman overall.

The best part of the day though was watching Kim run across the finish line with her son Russell – She also took first place in her age group.



So.. the WC qualifying spot is confirmed, and many of my friends who raced in Denmark are also making the trip in '07 so I'm looking forward to a great time.