

April 21st, 2008 - "Doubt is not a pleasant condition, but certainty is absurd" - Voltaire

This will be my first update of the year that actually involves a race report, or in this case, two race reports! Since returning from my training trip to Austin and Tucson, I've been steady at following my training program and being very diligent about putting the correct efforts into each session. I knew that if I could give myself 5-6 weeks of solid work that I would come out the other side feeling much more confident about my fitness. Well, on April 12th I put this training block to the test and signed up for a little triathlon in Golden, Colorado. The idea was not only to check fitness but also to warm up the competitive juices, if you will.

The race was a 400 meter pool swim followed by a 7.2 mile bike and a 3.1 mile run. This is, by far, the shortest bike leg I've ever done in a triathlon.... thank goodness! I had a solid swim and got out of the water in third position, behind two VERY good swimmers. With the temperature outside hovering around 28 degrees, my transition to the bike involved putting on a jacket and a pair of gloves.... there's a first for everything, I suppose! Once I got onto the bike I had pulled even with the guy in second place. He and I rode together for a lap and a half of the 6-lap bike course. Then I found myself alone as the guy in first place dropped from the race due to the cold temperatures. I pushed hard on the bike because I knew there might be a few good runners behind me. I got off the bike with almost a three minute lead, but then the triathlete's worst nightmare hit. I was sent the wrong way by race officials at the beginning of the run! I was sent down an adjacent street and upon arriving at the intersection there was no place to run as all avenues were blocked. I asked an official in that region which way to go and they did not know, as that was not their job description. Finally, someone from the area ran back to where I had left the transition area and asked them where I'm supposed to go. A third official ran around the corner and just started pointing down the street in the general direction I was supposed to run. I worked my way onto the sidewalk and headed down the street, still not sure if I was ever going to find the right course. After about 4 blocks of running I saw the bridge I was supposed to cross and I headed that way. Luckily, I was still in first position and it was an out-and-back run so I could see the competition upon my return. As I headed back I realized I had about a two minute lead still and was able to enjoy the last mile or so of the run and take a convincing victory. I was very pleased as it's difficult to come by victories in such a highly participated sport. All said and done I was rewarded with a free meal at a very nice restaurant in Golden and a great feeling of accomplishment. Not to mention a little peek into my current fitness level, which is good!

On Sunday of this week I entered my second ever cycling race at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. It was a windy morning but not nearly as cold as it could have been. For those of you in warmer climates you may not know that this winter has been really harsh on us "high country" people. Not only did we get a big snow in early October of 2007, but less than a week ago we had 6 inches of snow in my yard! My patience has been wearing thin to say the least! Anyway, back to the race report..... We started out with a group of about 60 guys and it was 3 laps of 12 miles and had a climb of 3.5 miles in each lap. It is actually the same course that the 1986 World Championships were held. The first lap of the race was taken relatively easy by the whole group and we only managed to drop about 25% of the field after 12 miles. On the second lap there was a noticeable pace change and during the long climb we dropped another 25% of the men we had left. By the end of the climb I had gathered the information I needed, which was that there was only one other guy that had the legs that I had that morning. I rode up next to him and asked him if he wanted to try to break away on the last climb. Of course he obliged knowing that was both of our best chances of getting a victory. Starting the final lap there was a breakaway by a lone

rider and he had some teammates in the group that were willing to let him go and not help anyone catch him. This rider pulled ahead as much as a half mile and it looked like he was going to stay away and win. The rider I had spoken with and I decided to leave about 2 miles earlier than we had planned and tried to reel this lone rider in. We pushed hard and caught him about a mile into the climb and he was broken. The wind was howling, making it quite difficult when you are alone. My partnered rider and I quickly left this guy behind and hoped to make it just the two of us for the win. I pulled and pulled and pulled and he told me "I'm dead, I have nothing left in my legs" and I had no choice but to keep pushing. He sat on my wheel for the rest of the climb and all the way to the last 200 meters, then he put in a magical sprint to the uphill finish and I knew I had been duped! I sprinted with him and sat on his wheel hoping he would lose his sprint and I could pass him at the very end. Sure enough he gave up with about 75 meters to go and I passed him for the win!

Very pleased with the performance and I have to say that a cycling race is NOT something I ever expect to win, but I will take them when I can get them!

I have updated my race schedule and to my disappointment, I have realized that the Calgary, Canada ITU race has been canceled this year. I was really looking forward to that! I have replaced it with two possibilities and I will decide between the two at a later date. Check **RACE RESULTS AND SCHEDULE** to get the latest. I hope everyone is doing well and please feel free to contact me anytime!