

Racing for Mikey - Ironman Lake Placid 2012 - Race Report

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 22 July 2012 19:53 - Last Updated Wednesday, 09 January 2013 21:40

Racing for Mikey - -



Press Release / Lake Placid Race Report

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With the help from friends, family and clients... Racing for Mikey was a big success this year. Here's a much overdue race report from Ironman Lake Placid, a financial update on how much we raised, and what's in store for next year.

July 22nd 7:00am the canon went off and Mike Reilly the voice of Ironman proclaimed the race had begun for the 2800 competitors. Having made my way from the olympic circle putting fresh drinks into my transition bags, walking towards the lake the atmosphere was electric. Everywhere I looked were people just like me who had trained 9+ months for this one day in July, and just getting to the starting line healthy enough to compete is a challenge in of itself. With U2 blaring, the mist rising off Mirror Lake and the crowds lining the shores it was go time. Found myself about 3 persons back from the starting line, fully aware that 2800 competitive people were about to turn the lake into a lake full or pirnana.

The Swim - at 2.4 miles, it is by far the shortest of the events in an Ironman. As some say - the Swim can't make your day, but it can end it. Mirror Lake right in downtown Lake Placid is the

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venue, a narrow crystal clear lake in the heart of the Adirondack Mountains. Goal today was to take it easy on the swim, and for the first loop that wasn't hard to do because of the human congestion. By the 2nd loop things began to open up and there weren't as many feet kicking me in the face, or hands punching me as there were on round 1. The swim even though the shortest, i'd argue could be the most intimidating. If one were at all claustrophobic, you just have to be ready to be kicked/punched and literally dragged underwater. The 2nd loop was going very well, except my goggles began to leak, at this point i was just excited to get on with the day and get onto the bike... Swim - 1:19

The Bike - a 112 mile roller coaster ride through the Adirondacks. Leaving the shores of Mirror Lake i had a short jog to the Olympic Circle to T1. This is where 1800 men congregate in a stuffy/humid white tent, stripping off their swim gear and donning the bike gear that they have the privilege of using for the next 4-6 hours. Here's where you need to put on your bike shorts, top, helmet, glasses, pick up your bike and head on out. Inside were hundreds of very helpful volunteers helping racers put on socks, sunscreen etc. Jogging out of the tent in your bike cleats i made my way towards my bike, it was in the middle of a sea of bikes. My bike was there, and the tires were still intact! (common problem for some, tires can pop overnight). The plan for the bike ride was SMOOTH & STEADY. The course has lots of elevation changes and with any long distance race you need to make sure you leave some in the tank - remember I still have to run 26.2 miles. The Lake Placid course actually turns out to be a great course for us Connecticut riders, if you're training in Florida or Texas - then good luck! First 10 miles is a climb, then the fun begins - a 10 mile descent into Keene Valley, where one can easily reach speeds of 40,50, or 60mph. The descent was great, the road conditions were not an issue and maybe I just got lucky there weren't many people around me, so i felt very confident the whole ride down. After reaching Keene it was time to get aero to take advantage of the small rolling hills along this part of the course. Turning into a perfect race day, not too humid or hot and maybe a chance of rain in the afternoon, well after i'd be off the bike. Upon reaching Route 86, the nice rolling hills were over, this is where the real work begins on this course. Hill after hill greets you pretty much all the way back to Lake Placid. Must have passed a few hundred people on that first hill and at first i thought that maybe i was pushing it too hard, but once i checked my heart rate I was in good shape. The hills are my friends! (most people hate them!) Making it back into Lake Placid I felt a great relief of completing 56 miles, also had the pleasure of getting my special needs back (full of food, drink and other supplies) and a chance to find a porta-potty. Having to urinate during the race is a good thing, it means that you are hydrating enough.

Back in the Saddle after a quick refuel, it was fun shredding some tight lines through downtown Lake Placid, with the Crowds Cheering. There was a bit of a let down once the crowds thinned out, and the race course was getting thinned out as well. By mile 70 on my 2nd and last big descent the road was nearly empty. Reminding myself over and over again, slow and steady. I had my time set on my watch to go off every 12 minutes, reminding me to drink a few swigs of water or electrolyte liquids, and eat some energy bars. Considering i had been riding for over 4

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hours, and swam an hour I felt decent. My competitors were showing signs of deterioration, especially on the hills i saw lots of carnage, riders just crawling up, or some just pulled over bent over their handle bars. These were great reality checks for me, this was an Ironman, and one has to be careful not to over do it for it's a very fast slippery downhill slope. The final miles were gruelling, it's all uphill from Willmington. The small talk dropped to a minimum, by mile 100 on the bike there was a lot of pain being experienced out on the course. Climbing that final hill was awesome, the streets were lined maybe not quite like the Tour de France, but I'll take it, cheering crowds and knowing that I only had to be on that bike for another 5 minutes was a great feeling. - Bike - 5:59

The Run - yes, a 26.2 Full Marathon, after swimming 2.4 miles, and Biking 112 miles. This is what seperates the men from the boys. Back into the Sweaty Transition tent, the carnage was much more visible now. The tent might as well have had a big Red Cross on it, inside were guys were being stretched, trying to stem muscle cramps, blister repair work, etc. It was time to ditch the bike cleats, throw on my light weight running shoes and get this thing done. I had some fanstastical dream that chugging Ensure durring my bike ride, then following it up with EFS electrolyte drinks would make for a great race day. But those lofty dreams didn't last long, after banign out my first few miles with a good 7 - 8 minute mile pace, my stomache had had enough and said pull over. Lets just say I was in indisposed for a good 15 minutes, just praying that I would be able to continue. Made it another 7 miles and had the same problem, and the worst and final at mile 10. I was really worried about dehydration, and loss of nutrition at this point, some doubt started to creep into my mind, i was entering an unkown area - I'd never before raced for this long or far. So i had no idea how my body could react to all of this insanity. The plan was run from aid station to aid station, each station was about a mile apart. At the aid station I walked, picked up a few glasses of water, one to drink, one to toss over my head/body, and also picked up ice cold white sponges which were great to keep the body cool. Food was off limits at this point. Mile 17 was a big turnign point, litterly the turn around spot on River Road. At this point my mind and body rejoiced, for this point forward I will be moving alwasly towards the finish line, it's only 9+ miles back up that hill to Lake Placid, and into that arena to the finish line. My watch said i had raced for 11+ hours, took me a few miles to perform a few simple math problems in my head to figure out what a possible finishing time would be. Told my family to see me at the finish line in 12 hours, and it looked like that was quite a possibility if i could keep it together. Up the short hill to the Horse Grounds, along the rollers, my pace picked up - the competition spirit in me kicked in again, eyeing all other competititors, (you never really knew if a fellow racer was on their 1st loop, or 2nd). Brought my pace back into the 9minute range, and hammered up that last big monster hill up into Lake Placid. Gumpy and I high fived on that hill, and some rowdy frat boys were there in wigs to help us up that god forsaken hill, up the hill and to the right around Mirror Lake, it was the pounding music and the voice of Mike Reilly which really hit home. You could hear Mike beling "...and you are... AN IRONMAN" booming over the speakers, the words we all dream to hear after all this training. Looking at my watch - 11:51, I hit the last turn around and it was all but downhill back to the arena. Through the chute, and around the big bend - it was time to enter the olympic oval. It was still daytime, the sun hadn't set, it was well before 12 hour mark, i was in no pain, tired, but no pain. Looking at the finishing line clock I had just finished my first long distance ironman with 4 minutes to

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spare - 11 hours 56 Minutes and 46 seconds.

I was very happy with the time, very happy to finish, and excited to find my family and give them a big hug for putting up with all the crazy/insane training schedules which i had been following for the past 9 months. Also many thoughts passed through my head all day about Mikey Czech, and all the other little children who go through Pediatric Brain Tumors. Mikey was my "one thing" that kept me going, when the tough got going. Thank you Mikey Czech Foundation, and a big thank you to all the people who made donations towards "Racing for Mikey".

Usually after I cross a finish line I head straight for the food line and binge on banana's, pizza, water etc... Only thing i could handle was a bottle of Poland Spring. Finding ones family among the trongs of spectators is no easy task, which in hind sight was probably a good problem - it kept me walking for a good hour after the finish . I've learned the hardway after many long races, especially marathons, your body is dying for your to stop, but if you do - your body will shut down and camp up. Best thing to do is shuffle walk for at least an hour to stretch those musicles out a bit.

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