

Age Group World Triathlon Championships Hamburg 2nd September 2007

My age Group 40-44

What was the Hamburg and the course like?

Hamburg was a great city. Everything was very well organised for such a large event of over 9000 competitors competing over the weekend.

The 1500m swim was in Lake Alster in the city centre and consisted of one very large loop. The 25 mile bike was 2 laps on closed roads. It was undulating with a dead turn at one end. The 10km run was pretty flat and followed the outside of the lake.

What did you have for breakfast before the race?

Large bowl of muesli, orange juice, brown roll with Nutella and a bottle of SIS energy drink two hours before the race. I also had half a bottle of diet coke just before leaving the hotel.

Did you feel nervous?

I always feel nervous before a big race, but was confidently nervous, as I felt fit and healthy as opposed to fit, stressed and ill before the London Marathon.

Why do you do Triathlons?

I love the sport and the way it makes me feel, particularly after doing a race you are satisfied with. It makes you feel alive and gives you a real buzz. It's also nice to win, but that isn't the main reason for doing it.

I love running cross-country events in the winter but I know I will never win a Surrey League race. It's all about the camaraderie and competing with other teammates that have got a similar interest.

How did you prepare in the weeks leading up to the race?

We went to visit Steve and Kathleen in Spain on the 9th August for a week. This was my hardest training week I had in the 12 weeks leading up to the race. It consisted of 4 hard mountain bike rides, two half hour sea swims and four 30-40 minute runs. At the end of one of the runs I did 10 one-minute efforts on a hill. We got back on Thursday night. I did the Bushey Park 5km on the Saturday and an hour hard on the bike after that then got on the turbo trainer and did 6 45second hard efforts.

From about 2 weeks out I started tapering.

After this all my training was steady as I didn't want to risk injury or being overtired. I flew out to Hamburg on Friday and did no further training until the race on Sunday.

I do about 9-10 hours training a week during the summer consisting of 3-4 runs, three bike rides and 3 shortish swims. (I get bored swimming and miss training with other people in a session)

Did the Elites do the same course as the Age Groupers?

No they did a couple of small laps for the swim, 8 laps around the city centre and then more laps for the run.

This was better from a spectator point of view.

Did you think you had a chance of doing well before the race?

I was well prepared, feeling fit healthy and wasn't feeling stressed out at work in the same way as when I did the marathon, so I was fairly confident. I even said to Danny the night before the race that I was feeling great which I don't remember saying all year.

I knew one of the G.B girls in my age group got a Silver medal last time at Worlds. I had beaten her once and she had beaten me twice last year.

I knew I had a good chance of a medal but I didn't think it would be Gold.

What did you think about during the race.?

Not a lot really. The only times I have started thinking about things in races has been when I have been taking it too easy.

Did you know when you were in the lead?

No.

We went off in 10-minute age groups. The 45-49 year old women went off before us so I could see lots of women but didn't know if they were in my age group until I passed them and could see the age category on their leg.

In the swim it seemed like there were loads of women ahead when really it was only about 8 or nine. Once on the bike no one passed but with so many other women in the previous age group I wasn't certain how many I had overtaken.

I had a great run for me, and again no one passed me. When I crossed the line I still wasn't certain exactly how I had done.

It wasn't until the second placed women came up to me and said well done that it actually dawned on me that I might have won.

I didn't really believe it until I saw the results up on the wall an hour later.

Why do you think you raced well for this particular race?

I was feeling healthy, uninjured and work stress had calmed down.

I also had good race preparation beforehand. The accommodation I was staying in was quiet and the bed was really comfortable so I felt well rested. I felt in a totally different frame of mind compared to earlier in the year.

I also had a tooth out that had got infected and this immediately made me feel a lot better.

What do you think you have learned over the years of doing triathlon?

You have got to enjoy it. Training schedules or coaches are good especially for motivation, but programmes have got to be achievable and fit in with your own life. If you want to do well you have to be prepared to put the effort in and concentrate on your weaknesses. Mine has always been my running and although my marathon went pear shaped, I know all that training I did for it has paid off and I am seeing the results now.

Listen to advice especially if they have your best interests at heart but be confident in your own ability. If you have put in the effort you should get the rewards.

Many triathletes, (not runners so much) tend to love giving out advice and trying to tell you what you should be doing or what you have been doing wrong. Many of the better people to listen to are not always the ones who have the most to say.

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