

Sue's Race Report for 6-17-18 "70.3" (Half Ironman) Syracuse, NY

Believe it or not, where I place in my Age Group in a race is not always the most important element of a race! There are many reasons for picking a particular race when building to be in peak fitness, strength and readiness for my biggest race ever, the IRONMAN® World Championship in Kona, Hawaii October 13th.

Syracuse Half Ironman was picked due to its bike and run courses: They are very hilly and it is HOT much like what I will face in Kona, Hawaii in October! The Syracuse bike has 3,244 feet of climbing and the run course has 670 feet of climbing. This starts to prepare me for the 5,814 feet of climbing I will meet on the bike in Kona (but spread over twice the distance), and the 1,009 feet of climbing on the run. So Syracuse's hills are much more compressed than Kona.

Syracuse was also picked to test my nutrition plan, assess my current tolerance to the heat and humidity, and is an opportunity to practice fast transitions between sports and practice implementing racing strategies. It also gives me a status report on my mental toughness, and helps finalize the equipment I will use. Racing also gives a jolt to the aerobic system building my aerobic conditioning and brings a surge in strength after the post race recovery period. It also gives me opportunity to put the swim, bike and run together all at once which I don't get a chance to do at race pace during training. This "intel" will be taken into my next race in Culpeper, VA in early August which is also a hot and hilly bike and run course. The Culpeper Olympic race was picked for my season to further build further conditioning and strength heading into Kona.

Racing Syracuse was a mission accomplished in so many ways. My nutrition plan worked, and my mental resolve was firmly in place—I never once looked longingly at the finish line as I turned to take the second loop of the run! (LOL)

I executed the race plan and made the necessary adjustments during the race. I tolerated the heat pretty well, and judging how sore I was the day or two afterward I have stimulated muscle growth! My equipment worked as planned but I will research further to find the perfect running belt! Ah....while all this information is good, but you still want to know how I placed?



The water was 68 degrees and wetsuit “legal” – this is always my preference! A wetsuit keeps me warm and gives me extra buoyancy which equals speed!

It took me 35minutes to swim 1.2 miles. This is a good time for me.



This is my downhill, hang onto the brakes bike position. Gently and intermittently squeeze the back brake and feather with the front to avoid a head-over-the-handlebars tumble if you grab the front brake too hard! I reached speeds of 41.7 mph and that was with holding my speed in check!!

I burned 1300 calories over 3hrs 50min of the bike.

What? You still want to know where I placed???



FYI... of 1250 total competitors, my time beat 566 others from ALL age groups, male & female!

By the run my legs had already been worked over getting up and over all the hills on the bike. It takes a toll for sure, but.... this is triathlon—swim/bike/run!

It took me 2 hours and 33 minutes to finish running 13.1 miles and I burned another 1000 calories. I'm guessing that I burned around 3,000 calories in the 7hrs and 9 minutes it took me to finish the 70.3 miles.

Another reason I race is to inspire others to get active or stay active, especially as they get older. It's never too late to start.

Again I heard from some passing me, "I hope I can still race like you as I get older!" "You look great!!"

And....The results of this race? I came in second. I was overtaken in the last mile of the race and couldn't muster anything more to respond... I had given my all and to me, that's always where I want to end the day—to have given my very best effort to the task at hand, leaving nothing in reserve by the very end. Mission Accomplished! As my husband Carlos likes to say, this is living with "regret prevention!" While I always hope that my fitness and race execution allow me to come in first, there is always much to gain regardless, and many more reasons to race! It was a great race!



They have wetsuit “peelers” to help you get the suit off. You get it down to your waist, lay down, they each grab an arm of the suit and pull turning it inside out; they hand you your wetsuit and you are on your way to T1 to get your bike.



We rode through beautiful farm country and past lakes.





There is a smile on my face as I head out the first lap of the run spotting Carlos on the side! And I'm looking at Carlos! My Honey, my supporter, and best companion!



The finish line is the sweetest and most welcome place to be!

I'm ALWAYS so glad to be done, and SO glad I raced: I conquered, and now on to recovery, rest and restoration, and a nice shower, a cheeseburger, fries and ice cream! 😊