

Noosa Triathlon 2010

After struggling through training during a Wellington winter, I arrived in Noosa nearly a week before the actual race. I arrived to amazing weather; bright sunshine and temperatures of over 25 degrees. The locals were still wearing beanies and saying how glad they were that 'winter' was nearly over. I spent the week prior to the race training and reminding myself of what it was like to swim in the great outdoors.

On the Wednesday, I did a lead-up event, the Endura Run Swim Run. I'd never done an Aquathlon before so I had no idea what to expect. The race was a 1.5km beach run, 750m swim, followed by another 1.5km beach run. It was really tough getting my breathing under control after the first run but the swim and second run went okay. Most of the competitors seemed to either be a) elite Australian representatives or b) local surf life saving champions. There were some very little kids doing the race, luckily they went first.

On the Friday, I went and registered. The race pack was a back pack and there were lots of sponsors' goodies which was nice. I also met Emma Snowsill which was fairly cool. On the Saturday, I organised to arrive at transition an hour before it opened so I managed to be third closest to the front on my rack which I thought would make finding my bike easier. I then watched the 'Super Saturday' races which included an elite 5km race, a men and women's Criterium, and the Legends' triathlon (with Australian athletes/celebrities).

Race day began at 3.45am, which didn't actually feel nearly as bad as I expected. There was no public transport from the area I was staying in, I figured running to race might affect my performance later in the day, and my bike was in transition so I ended up getting a taxi to transition. My over zealous allowances for disasters on race morning resulted in me arriving at transition at 4.30am. However, this meant I was the first person into transition.

I went through my usual routine and hovered nervously over my bike while other triathletes all got their bikes ready. We had very little room but I negotiated an okay space with the competitors around me. At 6.15am, transition closed so I spent the next two hours watching the early waves go off and waiting for my wave. At 8.07am, the gun finally went and we were off. The swim went fairly well (by my standards). I've never stayed with a bunch before so it was cool to emerge with people wearing the same cap as me rather than the tail-end Charlie kayak! My transition was really good and I managed to avoid collisions.

The bike ended up going surprisingly well. There was a 3km climb (about the same steepness as Happy Valley road) which I passed lots of people on. Obviously living in Wellington does have its benefits! I ended up averaging around 30km/h which I was pleased with, although there was a slight discrepancy between my bike computer and the official times. Another good transition and I was off on the run which didn't go as well as I had expected. I had some major blisters forming and one of them popped about 2km in which wasn't ideal. The locals all came out with their garden hose. I ended up in a sprint finish (which I lost) but it was a great feeling when I was done.

On the Monday, I had a rest day and then got back into the training – I couldn't justify not training in such an amazing environment. I explored the area around Noosa and even met some Australian wildlife on one of my runs (a snake, dolphins). Overall, it was a great experience and such a fun race; I would recommend it to anyone!