

IRONMAN AUSTRALIA MAY 3rd 2015 - JESS FLEMING RACE REPORT -



Wow what a great weekend it turned out to be for me at Port Macquarie this year. I had a bit of a slow start to the year nursing a Hip tear which stopped me from any running for two months and a DNF at Challenge Wanaka earlier in the year. I didn't have time to do my normal run build up so I was very nervous to see how that marathon off the 180km bike was going to pan out.

Nick and I drove down on the Thursday after school drop off and it didn't stop raining for much of the way down. The forecast was looking very sketchy and I was preparing for the worst.

Saturday included the IRONKIDS event and I had been asked to hand out some medals at the finish line, I loved it! The excitement on the kids faces even though the organizers had to cancel the swim and just do a run due to the weather didn't stop them one bit!

We had 11 of our programmed clients racing on the weekend and it was great to catch up with them all, some we had never actually met face to face. We always try to have a catch up and a swim with our athletes when we're at the same event which is nice as our coached athletes live all over Australia.



Race day morning while walking towards transition I looked up and there were clear skies! I was super excited to race and couldn't wait for the start.

My swim went well for me, while being injured I had a little bit more time to swim which paid off and I got a PB of 56.25 and I was very happy to hear that I was only 4min 30sec behind the lead coming out of the water. You might think that is a lot but if you knew where I've come from that is a pretty amazing improvement!

Growing up in Sweden I never swam as a child, in Australia it's part of every child's upbringing through school programs, local surf clubs etc so it comes naturally to most Aussies. I grew up playing basketball, soccer and downhill skiing! Every year I get a little bit better at it and now I'm not freaked out about the swim anymore.

When I got on the bike, which is my favorite of the three by far, I guess the strength from basketball and downhill skiing has given me an advantage and riding has always felt pretty easy for me.

I quickly found myself in the zone and just tried to keep calm and ride my own pace. I quickly caught up and passed Caroline, Marie and Michelle Wu, while it took a little longer to get up to Michelle Gailey and Christie Sym. At the end of the first leg I had and was now sitting in 3rd behind Lisa and Michelle Bremer.

At the turnaround before returning home on the second lap I spotted Bremer who was only a few seconds ahead. I made sure I took my time and didn't go too hard on the way back but rode within myself, my bike time on the day was 5.11 which was 4min faster than 2 years ago when I last raced Port (then in AG). Running out of transition I was told that I was 2.30 behind Lisa who had had a fantastic bike leg.



I was surprised to spot her on the hill only a couple of km's out of transition, while she seemed to be having a tough run and later pulled out due to medical reasons. Taking over the lead female position was exhilarating while I was thinking to myself to keep the pace steady and not look back! After only one lap I felt myself slowly fatiguing and slowing down while not being able to do anything about it I just kept putting one foot in front of the other.



At one point the 2nd place rider came up to my rider and called out 2nd place girl (Christy Sym) is walking up the hill, but then I was walking too and I started laughing as I thought my gosh this is going to be a very long day!! Christy got within 15seconds of me but she must have gone out too hard as she never made the pass and later dropped out. At that stage Bremer was hot on her heels and it wasn't long until she caught up to me.

When Bremer came past I kept thinking I was jealous of her long legs !! 😊 I tried to stay with her but only lasted a few km's and then realized I wasn't going to make the distance at that pace so had to slow down somewhat.

When I finally got to the finish line 2.40behind Michelle I was in agony but extremely happy to finish in second place and first Aussie!! Starting the day with high hopes for a good placing I felt that I had done a great job, not enough running training early on this year showed but at no point I was going to give up and coming through in second place was a great feeling.



Ironman Australia put on a fantastic race, 30year anniversary of the event and I was honored to be part of the event this year. Since the race I've been amazed by how many people followed the race and the congratulations have been coming in left right and center, the local paper sport headline 'mum just super in Ironman heroics' my boy's School Head of Sport made a specific announcement at the school assembly which made them both feel very proud.

Taking part of this amazing sport through racing and coaching keeps on giving me a huge amount of satisfaction and the fact that I'll be 40 this year won't stop me, if you want to do it you can, don't let anything stop you. If there is a will there is a way.

Pictures: witsup.com & Delly Carr
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