



SUE CADMAN - LAKE PLACID IRONMAN RACE REPORT

There is nothing like the buzz and anticipation of an Ironman. It is hard to believe it is actually over...and we did it, the Lake Placid Ironman. Nine months of training for one special day...a day I will never forget, July 24th, 2005. A great analogy that one of our fellow Ironman friends Mark Hudon said was "An Ironman is much like waiting for Christmas. It seems so far away and then before you know it, it's here and then gone."

It was, without question, one of the hardest and best days of my life. The sense of accomplishment and pride I felt was incredible. Not many other things I've ever done has topped it.

THE JOURNEY

This fascinating journey started a year ago when we went down to Lake Placid (LP) to watch our friends race and found ourselves signing up for this crazy event the next day. I always said I would never sign up for an Ironman... "4km swim, 180km bike followed by a marathon (42.2km) all in one day...are you crazy...why would anyone want to do that?" I said to myself. After watching the race it very quickly became clear to me why someone would want to do this. The look of joy, satisfaction, pain, achievement and self satisfaction on peoples faces as they cross that finish line...was truly amazing. Words can't even describe it. I then knew that I too had to do this.

November 2004 came upon us quickly and we started to get into training mode. Started getting back into a regimented workout schedule which was to our surprise nothing compared to what our training schedule was about to look like in January with coach Steve Bentley. Wow...is this for real Steve I said when we got our first months program. Twice a day...six days a week?? Crazy!!! Training for an Ironman is definitely a life style change...but as Rick and I were doing it together it made it a lot easier. I could not imagine doing this alone or without him.

TRI FOR A CURE

As we got into our training, things with my family began to get more difficult. My aunt Marilyn was fighting a terrible battle with cancer. Each visit I had with her was more and more precious and difficult as I knew they were numbered. Marilyn was an extremely strong, determined, and caring woman. In my last visit with her, days before she passed away, Rick and I told her we were training for an Ironman and that we had decided to now do it in her memory and raise money for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation. To try and help create a life without cancer for our children and their children. This put a whole new focus for me on the race and why I was doing it. It felt really good but at the same time very difficult. In honor of Marilyn's courage and strength battling cancer I dedicate my training and my race. And with the help of all of you it is with great pleasure that I share with you that we met and surpassed our goal of \$15,000 because of you. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

RACE WEEK

Our training months came and went quickly and soon enough we found ourselves loading up the 4 Runner with all our gear and heading down to Lake Placid...race week was here. We arrived into Lake Placid on Wednesday evening and my stomach was full of butterflies. With Mark and Fred (our personal helpers, chefs and chauffeurs for the weekend) already there, it sure was nice to see familiar faces amongst an unfamiliar place.

The next couple of days were spent registering, relaxing, driving the course (can you believe it took us almost 1 ½ hours to drive one loop of the bike course...and yes you have to do the loop twice!!), our last taper workouts, swims in Mirror Lake (I loved those) and checking out the infamous Ironman Village. It was clear that Ironman (IM) had taken over the town: sponsor banners, IM logo's, tri bikes, fit bodies and shaved legs everywhere. Lots of energy in the air!!! Wow...I can't believe we are here.

I think the only thing harder than the training and race day is trying to figure out all your transition bags. Wow, I think that was a job in itself. You have a separate bag for each transition and then a "special needs bag" for half way through the bike and one for half way through the run. I found this a little stressful (sorry Rick) as I did not want to forget anything. I think Rick and I went over our bags 100 times to make sure we had all the right things in the right bags. Running shoes in the T2 bag, cycling shoes in the T1 bag...spare gels in the transition bags and special needs...etc...I sure was glad to get those checked and then I could forget about them.

The rest of "our tri-gang" (Mike, Deanne, Sylvia and even Kim who was 7 months pregnant) and family started showing up and before I knew it, it was Saturday night the night before the big day. To my surprise my cousin Laurel decided to come and be part of our support and cheering crew. Wow, this was special and sure did put the icing on the cake. Laurel is the daughter of my Aunt Marilyn...as soon as she came in the door, I was so shocked but soon found myself giving her the biggest hug. We shared a few tears and then chatted about the challenge ahead of us. This sure was another great reminder of Marilyn and was going to be great motivation on race day. My Mom, Chuck, Becca and Julia came for a quick visit...it was so great to have them there and to receive our last calls from friends and family wishing us luck before we turned the phone off for a restful evening. We had a great meal thanks to chef Fred, Mark and Mike...the perfect pre-race dinner!!!

RACE MORNING

Woke up at 4 am and surprisingly had a pretty decent sleep. Breakfast was peanut butter on a toasted bagel and drank water and Gatorade to stay well hydrated for the swim and the long day ahead. Mark and Fred were so great to get up early and drive us down to the race start and transition area. First we got body marked with our race numbers and into the transition area to put the last items in our transition bags, food and drinks onto my bike (no this is not sandwiches and beer), final bike check and air in the tires. Now that was a big rookie mistake, we did not bring our own pump as they told us there would be lots of race bike support crew there with pumps...they failed to mention that the line up to get access to these pumps would be 40 minutes long!!! I decided I would just be patient and wait it out...but i was feeling bad for poor Mark that was waiting for us outside of the transition area and the fact that we were going to miss Tara start (our really good friend who is a pro-triathlete). They were starting 35 minutes before us.



Physically I was ready and relaxed for the race. I knew I put the training in and worked hard preparing for this day. My focus was to play it smart, be patient, and be very diligent with my nutrition/fueling.

I stayed fairly close to Rick all morning as he gave me a great feeling of comfort. Not sure I would have been able to do this without him. He was my strength on the days I didn't think I could go any further, my friend to laugh and smile with on the great training days and there for me 100% of the time. What an amazing adventure we had just been through together...and now it was time to do our own races.

We wrestled into our wetsuits, went down to the swim start and did a quick warm up in the water. They played the US Nation Anthem and it was at this point that I found it rather emotional...thinking about what we were about to do and the whole uncertainty of how the day would unfold for each of us. I was also hoping that my shoulder was going to hold out...I got a shoulder injury about a month ago and was not able to swim for a couple of weeks leading up to

the race but thanks to Tim Marshall, my chiropractor, he worked his magic and got me ready and able to swim again. Thanks again Tim...without your great A.R.T. work I am not sure what race day would have held for me. We debated on where in the water we would start and then very quickly found ourselves in the front half of the pack and realized this was where we were going to start. Gave Rick a kiss and wished him luck.



THE SWIM

The cannon went off. Yes they actually had a small cannon and the chaos started. If you think about a sock in the dryer or 2000 people all trying to get through a door entrance at the same time...this might help you get an idea of how the swim felt. I got kicked, punched, legs pulled, elbowed in the nose...gosh that hurt...my nose tingled, eye's watered but I knew I had to ignore it and just keep going. A fellow IM racer told us the night before "remember on the swim to be aggressive and just keep swimming, don't stop or you will get trampled". So I just kept swimming

hoping that soon it would spread out and get a little less congested. My first 1km was a little like being in Wrestle Mania but finally got into my own groove and only had a couple of grabs and hits...but to my surprise there were still a ton of swimmers around me. I completed my first of two loops and felt great, into the second loop I have found my pace and was feeling really good. My shoulder was holding up and I really wanted to step it up a notch in my pace as I was feeling strong but kept hearing coach Steve's voice saying "don't leave your race in the water and if in doubt be conservative...this is a long day", so I decided to keep at my pace. With 1 km left as I rounded the last turn around buoy I got kicked really hard in my left quad...ouch!!!! Instant charlie horse. I completed the last leg of the swim using mainly my arms and right leg. As I approach the beach I was so elated to have completed the first leg of my Ironman...I thought to myself I am now one step closer to finishing. I exited the water and headed for the wet suit strippers. Being female I went straight for a male stripper...well actually I was given a tip to go to the men as they are "stronger and quicker". So off came the wetsuit and I started down the long transition from the lake to the Olympic Oval (the transition area). Thanks Bruce-Man for screaming my name so loud!! Total swim time 1:07:18.

TRANSITION 1 (T1)

I grabbed my transition bag and headed to the changing tent. I fumbled with getting my cycling top on over my wet body with the aid of one of the friendly volunteers. Cycling shoes and helmet on and gel flasks into my jersey pocket. As I start to head out of the tent one of the volunteers yelled "who needs sunscreen"...I turn around to get some and she lathered it over my exposed skin. She started putting it on my face and unfortunately got it too close to my left eye. Not sure if you have ever had sunscreen in your eyes but man does it ever sting. Oh well, out of the tent, grabbed my bike and onto the second leg of the race.

THE BIKE

The bike course is two 90km (56 miles) loops with an out and back section. Total climbing is over 6,000 feet, which makes it a very challenging course.

So I am off on the bike with the excitement of being done one segment of the race and the thoughts going through my head of "I can't believe I am racing in an Ironman...I am doing this and I am going to finish this"!! The sunscreen still burning my left eye...and my left quad still in a charlie horse...I couldn't believe how beautiful the day was and I that I was lucky to be here racing. The bike started out with about 4 miles of riding out of town with lots of people cheering you on and a lot of false flat climbing. I started wondering how Rick's race was going...did he finish the swim before me or will I see him pass me on the bike. I soon hear a

familiar voice "Way to go honey" it is Rick...he seems to have had a great swim and was looking great on the bike. We exchanged a few quick words and back to the race. I focused on staying conservative and making sure that I am racing my own race. I continue to watch my heart rate to ensure I did not push too hard on the first loop. It was very important to remember that you had 180 km to ride. I soon approached the Keene hill which was about a 5 mile fast descent. I loved this part of the course...I love the downhill's. I controlled my speed at around 60 km/h as I descended through the sweeping turns.

The most nerve racking part of riding in a triathlon is all the rules. No drafting - must be 7 meters between riders, 20 second passing rule, must ride on the right and pass on the left, no blocking, etc.... They had race marshals through out the course that were looking for athletes not obeying these rules. Once you were given three penalties your race was done and you are not allowed to complete the race.

After the descent, the road flattened out a bit and I finally got into my rhythm. The ride started to feel really good. From the town of Jay through Haseltine, to Wilmington and then back to Lake Placid involved major climbing. The out-and-back to Haseltine was beautiful but seemed long. The nice part of this section was that you could see your fellow racers...I was looking forward to seeing how Rick was making out. We exchanged our quick hellos and back at it. It was definitely a motivator and he was looking good and strong. The last leg into LP was all net incline, but I watched my HR and took the hills at a steady pace.



What got me through it was knowing that our family and friends would be in town cheering us on. That was a great drive to get the first 90 km done. Thanks Fred for being at "Papa bear"...a climb that was pretty tough but oddly enough I enjoyed it on race day. It was packed with people cheering you on. I could only imagine what it would be like to be in the Tour de France!!! Finally done my 90 km...a quick stop at my special needs bag and I knew my family and friends were around the corner. Their cheering made me grin from ear to ear and was great to start the next loop...thanks a million guys!!

The second loop was difficult, but again I focused on staying within my designated HR, fueling properly and not going too hard as there was still a marathon to do after the bike was completed. After getting in those much needed calories, I was able to keep a fairly steady pace and fueling was going well (thanks to my watch that was set to go off every 20 minutes as a reminder to fuel). The difficult part is staying focused and not getting caught up in another riders pace, this was mentally tough, just trying to keep a steady fluid pace. Again the people along the way cheering us on were so great. The flags, the energy and their stamina were so motivating...and what was even better was the volunteers. Although the second loop was exactly the same as the first the downhill's did seem flatter, the up hills steeper, and the wind stronger. But all in all I still felt strong.

I entered the second transition area and was so excited to be done the bike and the second segment of the Ironman. I could now start feeling the excitement of being an Ironman. I knew even if I had to walk the marathon I would still make it across the finish line. During the bike, I reflected on everything triathlon training has taught me: patience, perseverance, acceptance and determination. Total bike time - 7:09:05.

TRANSITION 2 (T2)

Boy was I excited to get off of my bike. I sure didn't want to see that thing for a while. It is always funny to hear other racers yelling "bike for sale" or "free bike" as people were getting off their bike from the 180 km grind. Into the change tent and into my running gear. Another layer of sunscreen but this time none on my face...to avoid getting it in my eye again. Fairly smooth transition and off to the run.

RUN

The run course was also a double loop, 21km (13 miles) of moderate terrain. Running through town was so great. There were a lot of spectators cheering which gave me tons of energy. As soon as I got out of T2 I saw Becca right away...she was so full of enthusiasm...it was awesome. I was feeling so great to be done with the bike and in my last leg of the race. Shortly there after saw my Mom, Chuck and Julia...I think I could hear my Mom cheering half a km away. Then there was the tri gang...you guys rocked!! It was so great to run through so many people you know cheering you on.



Trying not to focus on the fact I had to run 42 km (26.2 miles), I started out my run, trying to hold a comfortable pace. After 2 miles I found my legs feeling fresh and pretty good (for now at least). My watch still beeping every 20 minutes to fuel I took my first gel on my run and that did not go over very well. I figured it was just temporary and I would be fine in my next 20 minutes. The first 8 - 10 km felt ok. It was exciting to be able to look for all my fellow IM racers. That was the good thing about the run. With all the bike positioning rules, you get very limited interaction with the other racers. And well with the swim, yeah, not so much interacting outside the bumping, punching and kicking. Not really my idea of good interaction! First I saw Tara (the Pro racer) and she was looking strong. It was so fun to be racing with her this time rather than watching her. Tara was the one who really got us introduced to this crazy sport. I was very anxious to see Rick...I was hoping so much for him that he was having the great race that he deserved. At our first passing I was doing ok and he was looking good. Smile on his face and as usual words of encouragement.

Shortly after I saw Rick my watch beeped indicating time to fuel again. I took my gel but again my body started rejecting it. My stomach got even quizzier and I had to stop to walk. I started throwing up and literally threw up everything in my stomach including what seemed like a gallon of my "Enduraton" electrolyte drink and water that I worked so hard at getting down on the bike. Now all of it gone!!! A number of fellow racers stopped to ask if I was ok and if I needed medical staff...but I did not want any help nor did I want to be pulled off the course. I knew there was a possibility of this happening and so I just kept going. I actually felt a little better and was able to start light running again. But as I tried to re-fuel nothing seemed to agree with my stomach.

I realized that I was in trouble when I could not keep food down. I was running on borrowed time as I could not get enough calories from just fluid. I made myself drink water and Gatorade. I knew I needed to continue to replenish my calories or I would not have any energy to finish. I could not eat anything and even the liquids were not settling. I knew I was not supposed to try anything new on race day but at this point none of my existing training foods were working and I was getting desperate to make something work. They had a wide variety of food at the aid stations, it was like a healthy buffet table at the "Mandarine".

So I tried a grape...nope that didn't work, a pretzel, an orange slice, flat coke, chicken broth...and nothing would go down and stay down. My spirits started getting low as I actually wondered if I would now be able to finish. I had always said if I had to walk the marathon I would...but I didn't think it would actually happen. I happened to look down and I saw my pink ribbon that was embroidered on my outfit and my yellow "LIVESTRONG" bracelet on my wrist...this really helped me remember and re-focus on why I was doing all of this. My Aunt had to withstand a lot more than what I was going through and it really helped me change my mental focus from "I don't think I can finish this"...to "I AM going to finish this, I CAN do this".

So obviously that "fresh" feeling was long gone, and fatigue had set in on my mind and body. The second lap of the run was purely a mental challenge for me, keep drinking, keep focused on hydration, keep cool, keep motivated, and most of all KEEP WALKING/RUNNING!! I found myself just surviving through the aid stations where water, ice cubes and Gatorade, were taken in as much as possible. As bad as I was feeling I smiled and thanked each of the volunteers. This was a long day for them too and the race would not be possible without them.

When I saw Rick for the last time before he finished I had to try and keep strong as I did not want him to worry about me and I wanted him to finish strong. I was so happy for him that he was about to become an IRONMAN, but I was also so sad that I was not going to be able to see him cross that finish line. A moment that I would have loved to have seen.

With 5km left I was mentally feeling much better as I knew I could do it and I was going to be an Ironman...I was going to finish what I had set out to do at 7am that morning. I also owe a lot to Becca, Laurel, Mike and Deanne who were getting nervous about me and make the trek out onto the run course to see how I was doing. As the hot sun started setting seeing them made such a difference and really got me going again. I can't tell you how energy you can gain and get from seeing people you know...for me their positive energy and encouragement was perfect. Total Runtime - 5:40:04.

THE FINISH

The finish was absolutely incredible. As I approached the Olympic Oval I forgot about how terrible I had felt for the last 4 hours and all I could think about was crossing that finish line. I entered the Oval and ran as if I had fresh legs, I thought for a moment I might cry but there was Becca and Laurel screaming at the top of their lungs "YOU ARE AN IRONMAN!". I then saw on the "jumbotron" the bleachers full of cheering people, I got so excited I could not stop smiling and focusing in on that finish line. As I focused more on the finish line I saw Rick standing on the other side with my medal in his hands. I crossed that finish line with a smile that could not be wiped off my face for a couple of days. Rick placed the medal over my neck and I swung my arms around him and didn't want to let go. He did...I did it...WE did it!!! I am an IRONMAN!! I looked over to the right and there was my Mom...wow was it ever amazing to have her there. I ran over and gave her a big hug and we shed a small tear! To Marilyn I thought...she helped me do it!! Total Ironman Finish Time - 14:11:03.



With the amazing feeling of accomplishment, determination, pain, achievement and self satisfaction and the cramping of my legs we "walked" (not sure if you can really call it walking) arm in arm to the Massage tent to try to get some relief back into my legs. I probably should have gone into the medical tent but at that point I really just wanted to get back to our family and friends and see how the rest of gang did that day.

I am grateful for the challenge that Ironman provided me. It has opened a whole series of doors I didn't even know were there. You couldn't have pried the grin off my face on Sunday -- I didn't stop smiling for a week!

Congratulations to everyone else who also completed the race Tara and Deb (who qualified for the World Championships) Dan, Pat, Rebecca, Ron and finally to my amazing husband and training partner Rick. I could not have done this without him. He was my motivator and my inspiration. A special thanks to everyone who came out to support and cheer us on; Mom, Chuck, Becca, Laurel, Julia, Mark, Kim (even though she was 7 mths pregnant), Fred, Silvia, Mike, Deanne, Jamie, Theresa, Monique, Nat, Bruce-Man, Erik T and Andy.

And finally a huge Thank you to everyone who contributed both financially as well as those who provided moral support. You all helped us get to the finish line as well as help us surpass our fundraising goals of \$15,000 to the Canadian Breast Cancer Society. That makes this race even more special.

MY STATS

Total Time = 14:11:03

Division Place: = 66/116

Swim Time = 1:07:18 (Pace 1:47/100m)

T1 = 7:34

Bike Time = 7:09:05 (Avg. Speed - 15.7 miles/hr, approx. 25 km/h)

T2 = 7:05

Run Time = 5:40:04 (Pace 12:59)

Things I learned at IM Lake Placid

1. Goggles are worn for many reasons. One is for keeping water out of eyes. Two is for helping block some of the glare of a rising sun as you swim into it. Another is to block against fingernails and hands entering your eyesockets.
2. It's crowded in the water with over 2000 people all trying to swim on the same line and all trying to get to the same destination as fast as they can. Don't underestimate the power of people in the water.
3. When you get kicked and punched just keep swimming. Now looking back I think maybe martial arts should have been part of my training. Would have made getting kicked and punched in the face not such a shocker.
4. Sunscreen on a neck raw from a wetsuit stings...and sunscreen running into your eyes for the first 30 km stings even more.
5. Peeing while biking is possible.

6. Support crews help pull against wind and hills. For miles I just focused on the cheers of my family and friends once I got back into town, knowing each pedal stroke was bringing me closer to them.

7. It's all about having little goals. Break the course up into small sections and accomplish those rather than focusing on 226 total mileage to be completed.

8. Unlike a regular marathon, where you start off feeling pretty good, feel a bit better, and then feel a bit worse, you actually start off the marathon in the "feeling a bit worse" category!!

9. Making yourself smile through the run helps relax... and gets more random people cheering for you, pulling you through the miles.

10. Not until you stop will you realize just how shaky your legs are. But you will still have the energy to run to the family and friends that helped you through the race.

POLAR GRAPH FROM RACE DAY

