

Scott's Roth Race Report.

It's the Wednesday after the race I no longer have to walk like John Wayne and it's about time I did my race report, so here goes.

Firstly all the talk of appearing in bondage/dominatrix movies couldn't have been any further from the truth, the family we stayed with were absolutely fantastic, yes they had a cellar but it was stocked with beer, and was a great place to store my bike. There was also a French couple staying there too of which Christophe was also racing. On arrival there was a big family meal awaiting us, where we were all introduced to one and other, infact we were given 3 hearty meals a day whilst there.

Saturday, day before the race, I went down to check in my bike and we bumped into all the other guys from Stafford Tri, it certainly eased the pre race nerves seeing familiar faces. Also saw Chrissie Wellington and told her I would be chasing her, I think that's what made her push so hard to break the course record!!! When we got back to our "new family" dinner was ready and after it was early to bed.

Awoke at 4am race day and had my usual porridge, only this race day was not the same as usual no need to keep going to the toilet, what's happening to me? Actually only needed 2 visits before the start. After checking my bike again I heard Pedro shouting me, and met up with the others, we all seemed very upbeat but I know I was extremely nervous, what had I let myself in for. Said a final farewell to Lisa and Harley and started to get into the wetsuit. One by one we were wishing each other good luck as the waves started until it was down to Fruity, Pedro and me, we were all put into the same wave. As we were making our way to the water in the final crowd the nerves were certainly starting to kick in, but I had a plan in my head and I was going to stick to it. I made my way to the front left for the start and as I got there the starting horn went and we were off, making good progress I got my first kick to the eye, sticking my goggles on even tighter which is better than them leaking I suppose. Feeling strong in the swim I was passing coloured caps from earlier waves, but in the back of my mind thinking am I going to strong, ah sod it I wont be needing my arms after the swim. At the second turn around I could only see a couple of pink caps (my rather fetching colour) ahead of me I started feeling really pleased with myself and dug in for the last 400m, swim done 1hr 4 mins.

Now just a small matter of 112 miles to ride, I put some cycling shorts over my tri suit for comfort and off I went. The bike course was fantastic beautifully surfaced roads through lovely countryside and some villages

and towns, there was also the German support which was second to none. Every town or village was out on the street cheering you on, infact the family we were staying with had made banners with my name and number on and were screaming each time they saw me. There is one climb called Solar which is lined with people either side 30,000 to be precise (website figure not mine) for a 1k climb, leaving just enough room for you and your bike to ride through. The feelings and emotions you go through are indescribable and for me this made my race, it`s definitely worth doing just to ride that hill. At the start of the second lap saw Lisa and Harley this gives you another lift but I started to think s#;t i`ve got to do this again, the second leg is certainly more subdued as people are starting to dig in, the banter between riders was not like it was or maybe it was just me shutting up! Finally the bit I had been looking forward to Solar again you have chance to get some speed up before the climb then it`s up on you toes giving everything you have got. It was here that disaster struck $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up whilst standing on my pedals the left crank suddenly comes off, "F@#K" I scream I cant believe it don't let my race be over. 4 Germans rush to my aid grab my bike take my multi tool and get to work trying to fix it, after 3 attempts they get it on but it is not right and I daren't put too much pressure on it, but I am so grateful none the less. I cannot select the big chain ring on the front or the small gears at the back as a result of this, but at least i`m moving, will it hold for the last 20 miles. People I have worked hard to pass start to come by and my head starts to go slightly as I was in a personal race with a mate that had done Austria the week before. I make it to the point where there`s only 10k to go when someone in front of me comes off on a bend I swerve to miss them only to go over some drains which in turn makes my crank come off again although still attached to my foot via the pedal. I try to replace it 3 times but it keeps coming off, there's nothing for it im gonna have to ride the last 10k with one leg. A race official stops to offer me help with tools but I tell him it's no good it's Kaput, in my best German accent, he says "there's 10k to go" but I just shrug my shoulders. As I continue he slowly passes taking pictures of me, lots of people pass shouting encouragement, I pass a bar in the last town before transition and

starts to push me for the last 5 k which is luckily mainly down hill. We chat he is German and from Frankfurt this being his 2nd ironman I tell him to leave me he is slowing himself down but he wont have any of it, I will be eternally grateful to this guy. Bike finished 5 hrs 43 mins.

T2 slap loads of Vaseline around my toes, trainers on and I desperately need to pee, it seems an eternity that I am stood in the thunder box and I realise ive left my cycling shorts on, I strip them off and hand them to a girl shouting my number, and bless her they were in my bag after the race. Right lets get this marathon started it is gonna be strange running with one leg like Popeye's!! After 3 k I see Chrissie Wellington just coming

in to finish I shout to her and she gives me a big smile, I look at my garmin im going to fast slow down, I don't need telling twice. I see Nick then Lou coming the other way, get a bit of a lift, then have to run down a hill thinking s#@t I gotta come back up this. See Mark looking strong and smiling he looks like he`s enjoying himself. Get to the first turn around and start back up the hill its a killer nothing out of the ordinary but a real strain on extremely tired legs. After about 10 miles my hamstring suddenly tightens and I have to stop to stretch it out, then I start to feel terrible my stomachs going over and I have nothing left, at the next aid station I stuff myself with energy bars ,bananas, gels coke and anything else I could get my grubby paws on and set off again. This gluttony strategy worked I started to feel better, and got some energy back. Saw Digger then Fruity then Pedro and could see they were going through the same pain I was. I remember my mate who had done Austria the week before saying it just 4 hrs of pain bite the bullet and get through it as it all stops at the finish and you`ll hate yourself if you quit. Tubby also said something to me about failure before I left and that`s ringing in my head too. So I push on, its gotta be the hardest thing ive ever done and im thinking never again this is it for me, the last 8 k of the run seem to go on for ever, then its down to the last 1000m and they throw another slope in that feels like mount Everest, finally you enter the finish chute and into the arena this point makes everything you have gone through worth it, I am an "IRONMAN", Lisa passes Harley over the barriers to finish with me but he sprints and I struggle to catch him but its done 10 hrs 56 mins 44 secs, after what I have been through I cannot believe my time I am elated a 3hr 58 marathon to boot. All the pain all the suffering was it worth it? Every bloody second of it.

As I pick up my medal and Tshirt Ulf the angel comes over and says "you made it then" I give him a big hug and cant thank him enough, all the wise cracks about the war and world cup I take back the Germans are one of the friendliest and kindest nations I have had the pleasure of meeting and would recommend this race to anyone.