

Spirit of Racine 2007

It had been a hectic week leading up to the race. Settling into my new temporary home and Boulder, adjusting to the heat and the altitude and finding my way around. It felt like I was no sooner here then I had to pack up the bike again for my flight to Milwaukee. Apparently the traffic into Denver can be quite bad so I left by 6am to make it in time for my 9.40am flight. In the end there was no need to hurry, my flight was delayed by 2 ½ hours. Once on board though, it was a short 2 hour flight, followed by a 45 minute drive and I was all checked in at my hotel in Racine. There was enough time for registration on Friday night then it was early to bed! Saturday I was able to have a quick swim in Lake Michigan before the Sprint Race began. It is amazing that it is a lake! It was more like a beach and swimming in the ocean. Into the car and I drove the bike course then headed back to my room for an afternoon nap and some R and R.



The view from my room in Racine

Sunday morning had arrived before I knew it and I had even had a good night sleep. This doesn't happen very often. Usually the night before a race I have trouble sleeping. A combination of nerves and all the food I have eaten the day before while carbo loading!

I was going to walk the 20 minutes to the race venue but I was lucky as I left the hotel there was a courtesy bus picking up athletes and spectators and jumped on board.

On arrival at the transition area I got myself organized and was ready to go! The next minute a Technical Official was coming around and checking all the Pro Competitors helmets. I didn't think much of this as I had the same helmet as the girl next to me (except mine was painted!) and hers was fine! But I was wrong!

We may have had the same helmets, with both being safe, but mine did not have a sticker inside it indicating it was purchased from the USA! I had my training helmet bought from Australia and my racing helmet from Europe but neither of them were good enough! It was extremely frustrating as it had nothing to do with the safety and protection the helmets provide, it was about the sticker!! So, by now I was totally stressed out and had to try and find myself a helmet! There was a local bike mechanic set up helping those racing and thankfully he had chosen to ride to the race and was kind enough to lend me his helmet for the event. It didn't matter that it was actually way too big for me, the officials just wanted to see the sticker!

Finally, it was race on! The female Pro wave was a small group of 10 so it was on from the word go! A one lap swim starting from one end of the beach and ending at the other and I did not want to get left behind. The last few races I have not had the best swims and was determined to make this one different. I think it is more about confidence and being more aggressive in the water. I find I always get bashed around a lot but with such a small group of women this didn't happen. The first group were gone after the first turn but I was able to swim with 2 others for the entire 1.9km and was happy to come out with the middle group.

If you have had a look at the results you can definitely tell that I am an Ironman competitor. My transition times were so slow! This is an area I can easily improve on but need to practice. Onto the bike and I was just behind Lisa Bentley and was going to push myself to stay with here as long as I could. It wasn't long until we had caught Heather Gollnick and our group of three pushed each other for the entire 90km.

Coming off the bike, it had begun to heat up and yes I was the slowest out of transition. This put me in 5th place.

Lisa was gone up the first little rise characteristic of her speedy run, but I was able to hang onto Heather and within a few kilometers had a little bit of a lead.

It was a two loop run, out and back, which included a small section through the zoo, past the lions and tigers! Definitely an interesting run!

Halfway through the run I had 50 seconds and was going to give everything I had to hang on to that gap. It was getting warmer and at each aid station I was drinking electrolyte and throwing water on me. This had unfortunately trickled down through the socks and I could feel the blisters getting bigger and bigger!

On the second lap, there were a lot more of the nearly 2000 athletes out on the run course and it was getting very crowded. I was unable to see the gap behind or in front. I just continued to run! The last 800m was the first glimpse I had of the girl in front of me, but I was going to run out of time!

I crossed the finish line in 4th place and 4.25 hrs which was a PB for me! I was ecstatic!

It was a great day for the group I am training with as Mirinda won breaking the course record, Abi was third and I came 4th! We celebrated post race with one of the best recovery food areas I have ever seen! There was so much yummy food!

I am now back in Boulder and enjoyed a restful week allowing the soreness to go before a couple of hard weeks leading up to my next half ironman on the 12th August.

It was a great start to the U.S. campaign and as long as I keep improving then things are heading in the right direction!

Happy Training!
KT ☺

Pictures from Boulder!



The Running trails are fantastic! Boulder Creek path is popular with everyone from walkers, runners and mountain bike riders.



Always something amazing to look at, even when you are trying to climb that mountain to 9000 feet!



The Switzerland Trail is famous for its rolling hills and the lack of oxygen in the air!