

---

**From:** tricredibles@googlegroups.com on behalf of Kyle Pitchford  
<kpitchford@greenvillenc.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 05, 2012 5:26 PM  
**To:** tricredibles@googlegroups.com  
**Cc:** Jenni Pitchford  
**Subject:** [Tricredibles] IMFL 2012 Race Report

I want to give a huge thanks to Jenni for being so supportive over the last 3 months while I trained for this thing! I Love You Honey!

Thank you "Ironman Ferries" for leaving the signs all around my neighborhood! It put a big smile on our faces when we got home after the long drive up from Florida.

Thanks Bruce and Carl for persisting in your workout invitations! You all know what a training recluse I am. The 112 we did a couple weeks ago gave me big confidence boost.

OK, so here's my recap:

This was my first Ironman, and although I don't have any others to compare it to, I thought that Florida was very well organized. Volunteers were great and staff was very professional. Ironman really seems to have gotten this triathlon thing down.

**The Stay** - We stayed at the Laketown Warf just .25 mi from the event. Very reasonable rates for a condo with 2 Bedrooms, 2 Bath, kitchen and ginormous balcony. Short walk to many places to eat and play mini golf.

**The Swim** - Chop and current were pretty tame. This was a mass start and 2 lap course. After an emotional goodbye with Jenni and Parker, I zipped up my wetsuit and headed to the far right side of the crowd. Sighting was a bit of a challenge with the swells, flailing arms, and sun glare, so I found myself mainly navigating by those around me. Heading back to the beach was much easier since we had buildings to sight off of. Upon completion of lap 1, we ran up on to the beach across a timing mat and back into the water. They had an aid station with water at this location as well, so I took advantage of that by slamming 2 cups of water. Lap 2 was a little less chaotic. I was happy to see I finished the swim in 1:09. This was bout 6 minutes faster than I was shooting for. In the run up to T1, they had "wetsuit strippers". Basically you get on your back, put your feet up, and 2 people jerk your suit off in about 2 seconds flat! Then its on to some dangling hoses to rinse down with fresh water and head into the convention center for T1.

**T1-** Found my bag easily, had a seat and put my shoes and helmet on. Lubed up well with vasaline to "minimize" chafing from the salt water and sand that was still in my shorts. Ate a bag of Chompz, slammed a 16oz of Gatorade and grabbed my bike.

**The Bike** - Winds were light in the first half and picked up to about a 10 mph headwind for the much of the second half. Road surface was impeccable for just about all the course with the exception miles 50-60. That stretch went a little like "thump thump.....thump thump...etc". Hydrated using Cytomax, Gatorade and Perform taking 2 big gulps every 2 miles. Nutrition amounted to a Roctane every 45min, a PB&J at mile 56, and a couple soft-bake cookies here and there. The bike really seemed to go by pretty quick. Nothing like the long lonely ones in my training. I only saw 3 instances of blatant pack drafting. Nothing more than what you might see at White Lake though. I wound it down a bit about 5 miles out from T2 to get my legs ready for the run. I could tell that the sun was heating things up, but I felt strong. Finished the bike in 5:45. About 15 minutes faster than predicted. I was pretty stoked at this point.

**T2** - Upon opening my T2 gear bag I was horrified to find that my camel back full of Gatorade had leaked almost entirely out. My shoes, socks, visor all marinating a Gatorade! Oh well, what can you do. I headed to the first water table and did my best to rinse everything out.

**The Run** - The run is a flat 2 loop course mostly through neighborhoods and a beautiful state park. Saw Bruce, Carl and Bert several times as well as Philip. I was shooting for a 4 hour marathon. All my long bricks in training had been at this pace and it was always very comfortable. Right on pace for mile 1 and 2. However, I noticed I kept feeling my calf muscles twitching a bit. By mile 3 my calves began cramping so badly I could only run about 200yds at a time before I would have to hobble to a walk. I began to increase my electrolyte intake and ate some bananas at each aid station. There were aid stations about every .75 mi, and I took full advantage of each one. However, my condition continued to deteriorate. Finished the 1st lap in a little over 2 hours. Shortly after starting the 2nd lap, my stomach shutdown on me. Unable to take on any fluids and nutrition, and still struggling with 80 degree heat, I knew the "train was leaving the tracks"! I definitely had a few dark moments on the 2nd lap. While in the state park, I was reduced to severe leg cramps and dry heaving and had to lay down for about 20 minutes. A volunteer named Jeremy stuck with me and actually walked with me for about 2 miles after I was able to stand up again. Just before making the final turn to the finish chute, Philip gave me a big high five and I slowly jogged down until I heard "Kyle Pitchford - You are and Ironman!"

### **The Finish -**

Thankfully, Jenni had collected all my gear bags and bike already! I was so exhausted at this point and suffering the physical effects of dehydration, all I could think of was getting back to the room and recovering. By about 11pm, I was able to start drinking and eating again and quickly started coming back to life. The next morning, we met Bruce and Angie at McDonald's before heading out, and learned the good news about his Kona slot. After a bunch of pizza, milk shakes, hamburgers, fries, chicken tenders, beer, etc, I'm still about 4 pounds lighter than when I started the swim!

### **What I learned -**

Support from fellow competitors, volunteers and spectators can be a powerful force in keeping you motivated to move forward when things get ugly.

Protect the bite valve of your camel back if you put it in your gear bag!

I suspect, I may have gotten behind the curve on my hydration starting with "before" the swim. I probably also should have taken salt tablets during the bike and run, instead of relying solely on sports drinks alone. In training, I experimented with pickle juice when I had post work out cramps with good results. I wonder if putting some in my run special needs bag might have helped me. All in all, I think my training and taper was adequate, as well as my pacing and nutrition, but dehydration has always been my biggest limiter.

I'm happy to finish the 2012 Triathlon season with an Ironman under my belt. I'm already thinking about which one to do next! But for now, I'm looking forward to settling into my winter running routine.