

## Two Sisters Tri2Tri – Our First Triathlon!

### 2010 Tempe International Triathlon Race Report - Olympic Distance

By: Kirstie Burns



#### **Race morning:**

I slept terribly...up at 12, 2 and finally my alarm went off at 4am. I was thrilled to finally but able to get up and do something. I got dressed, had coffee and a peanut butter whole wheat bagel. I picked up Tracy at 4:40 and we headed to the race. I drank a Gatorade and ate a banana on the way. We arrived at the race and I began to get so nervous. Terrified really. Plus, when I am nervous I start to shake and they were coming on strong! We went to transition and set up our things. We took our bikes to have the tires filled up and went to have our bodies marked with our race number and ages.

We got our timing chips and then had tons of time to kill! We walked to the water to look at the buoys...that was a mistake! They seemed so incredibly far away and with the sun facing us we could barely make out the second one. So intimidating! Our wave wasn't going to take off until 7:12am with all the sprint waves taking off first and then some of the Oly ones too. We spent some time hanging out at the Phoenix Tri tent getting some much needed boosts of confidence and encouragement. We watched the sprint waves take off and watched the earlier waves go through

transition. About 6:45 we had our wetsuits on and were just waiting for our time to get in the water. By this time, I just wanted to get in the water! I didn't feel terrified anymore just ready to race!

### **The Swim:**



We waited on deck for our wave to be allowed into the water. We put on our goggles and caps. Finally we were allowed into the water. I hugged Tracy quick before we headed down the stairs and said "Let's do this". I jumped in the water and started treading water. Tracy was right behind me. It was a treading water start so we just kind of bobbed until the gun went off. Crack! And we were off! Our plan was to stay together until the first turn so that we could make sure we were both ok. I was swimming for few seconds and looked back and Tracy was too far behind me. I waited for her to catch up and then we kept swimming. I looked again and she had fallen back again so I stopped and asked if she was ok. She said she was..but she didn't resume swimming. I knew something was wrong so we just treaded water and tried to breathe. She kept telling me to start swimming and that she would be fine. I said no, I wasn't leaving until I knew she was alright. I tried to get her to follow another swimmer's bubbles...to help her know where she was but she wasn't ready to swim. She said she was okay and she would be fine and really wanted me to start swimming. So I did. She is strong-willed and I knew she would be able to pull it together. I started swimming and had trouble swimming more than 25 or 50 yards without stopping to catch my breath or do the breast stroke for a minute. It was so weird. I just kept telling myself to make it to the turn around and it would all be fine from there. Since I couldn't see in the lake anyway, I mostly swam with my eyes closed unless I was breathing or sighting. Once I made the second turn I felt relief

that it was half over but started to see some of the men from the wave behind us passing me. That sucked. I also started to feel claustrophobic in my wetsuit and all I could think about was getting it off. I counted in my head "one, two, three" over and over just to keep myself swimming. I passed quite a few people on the swim. Finally, I made the turn towards the shore and stairs. I was almost there! I reached the stairs, pulled myself out of the water and ran down the carpet. I was so happy to see my family there! Justin, the boys, Mom, Billy and the girls and Nicki. I yelled for someone to tell me when Tracy got out of the water so I would know how far back she was. I was so excited that I was really doing it and I felt like the hardest part was over.



Me



Tracy

### T-1

Ran into transition and sat down and started to pull off my wetsuit..one leg zipped right out, the other I could not get off for the life of me. Finally I realized that it was stuck on my timing chip. I took off the chip and then the wetsuit came right off. I washed off my feet got on my socks, shoes, race belt, helmet, glasses and put my gels in my shirt. I took half a pack of shot bloks on my way out of transition.

## The Bike:



Me



Me

Made my way to the bike mount area, waved to Justin and Jake and successfully got on my bike and headed out. My goal was to go hard, as hard as I could for the first half and then hopefully be able to keep it up for the second half. I went out strong and felt pretty good. My legs were tired from the swim which I didn't expect but was still able to keep pretty good speed. I didn't know how far back Tracy was until I finally saw her about 6 miles in. She wasn't too far behind me and was keeping a great pace (with no computer to guide her I might add!) Each time we saw each other we yelled to each other for encouragement. I only passed three maybe four people the entire ride and people were continually flying by me. There must be something I am missing in the bike portion. It didn't seem like they were spinning faster than me or in different gears but they all hauled ass past me. This didn't discourage me but I definitely want to figure out what I need to do to go faster! I ate one of my Hammergels and drank most of my water and part of my Gatorade in the

first half of the ride. I was thinking the entire ride how much fun I was having. Toward the final 5 miles or so my "parts" were extremely sore..so sore that I was having trouble pedaling at times. I don't think I was able to keep up the same speed on the second half due to this and my quads were beginning to hurt. I was looking forward to the run.



Tracy



Tracy

## T-2

T-2 was uneventful. Racked my bike, threw on my running shoes, watch and visor. Ate another half a pack of shot blos and two tylenol (just for good measure) and headed out to the run.

## The Run:



Me



Tracy

By the time we got to the run it was getting WARM! I felt pretty good and was so excited to be close to finishing. I knew at this point there was nothing that was going to stop me from finishing. I also knew Tracy would catch me at some point and I was looking forward to that. I ran out of transition and saw members of the Phoenix Tri Club cheering me on. That was awesome. The first mile was pretty hard..my hamstrings were really tight and my right hip was bothering me but I kept up the mantra "just keep moving...one mile at a time". At every aid station I had a small sip of water and poured the rest over my head and down my back. At about mile 2 1/2 we headed up a short hill and passed under a bridge. They had volunteers handing out ice cold sponges. I can't tell you how awesome these were. Saved me and a few others I'm sure! I squeezed them over my head, face, neck, back...ahhh relief for a

moment from the heat. I walked up the stairs to the Mill Ave, bridge and started running again. At the end of the bridge Nicki was there cheering me on and it was the perfect place for her to be. Thanks Nic!! I headed down the hill to do it all over again. Initially when I saw the run route was two loops I was dreading it because I thought it would be horrible to have to do the same route twice knowing how far you had to go. But it turned out to be great. I loved that I could break it up into sections in my mind. So after the first loop I only had three more miles to go! I saw Tracy for the first time and yelled to her to catch me! She said she would. Right before mile 4 Tracy caught up to me. We talked for a minute about how she was feeling (very, very ridiculously sore from the bike, and a bad cramp in her side) and I had a cramp that sort of when all the way around my stomach and back. She also told me about her panic attack in the water and how she ultimately overcame it! I told her to take off and leave me. She is a much faster runner than I am. She said she didn't want to and that she couldn't run any faster than she was already running. I don't know if that was true or she just said it to me but how awesome was it that we were going to finish together. We ran across the bridge and down toward the finish line. The crowd, our families, Nicki, the Phoenix Tri-Club were all cheering and we threw our hands up in the air! We did it!!!!



**Official Results Kirstie:**

Swim: 33:10

T-1: 3:14

Bike: 1:30:44

T-2: 1:39

Run: 1:00:15

Total: 3:09:05

**Official Results Tracy:**

Swim: 37:33

T-1: 2:26

Bike: 1:30:59

T-2: 1:26

Run: 56:38

Total: 3:09:05





Thanks to everyone who made this race possible. Justin for all the support, love and encouragement...plus the hours with the kids all to yourself on the weekends when I trained! Tracy for being the best sister in the world. I could never have done this or even thought I could in the first place without you! Nicki for bringing it to every early am workout and providing so much support and a great sense of humor. Mom for always being there to encourage us and of course for my bike! To the Phoenix Tri Club for being so welcoming to two newbies and helping us gain the knowledge and experience we needed to finish.

So when is the next race?