

IRONMAN 70.3
BOULDER

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I have now been up in Boulder Colorado for nearly 6 weeks and on Saturday I raced the Boulder 70.3. It has been a little while between races or at least good races. I did race Wildflower triathlon just before I came up to altitude but it was a terrible day with lots going wrong and rather than write a negative report and make excuses I just chose to forget about it.

So up in Boulder (1600m above sea level) I have had a very good training block with a slight miss hap a couple weeks ago where a blister under the foot split deep and up between my toes... was not cool and took me off running for about 9 days. With the help of a great sports Doctor (Kevin – Team Cannondale Garmin Sport Doc) we fixed the issue fairly quick and I had nearly two weeks running again before the race. The altitude adjustment this year has been so much easier and smoother than the other years and the numbers in the last few weeks were looking good, so I was excited to race!

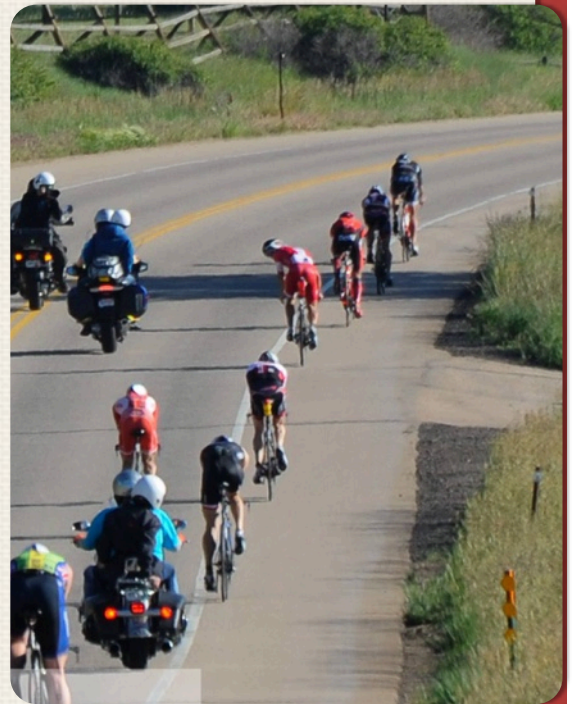


The good and bad thing about racing in Boulder is you pretty much get to race the best guys in the world as a lot of them come here or live here so the start list is stacked. This year was no exception with the red hot favourite going into the race being Tim Don.

The race started at the Boulder Reservoir and it was a pretty simple rectangle swim. I had a good start and was with the top guys for the first couple hundred meters but then something strange happened, not sure if it was due to the initial pace and/or the altitude but I suddenly felt very tight across my chest and very constricted and I panicked a bit, actually quite a lot this had never happened and it freaked me out. I slowed down and pulled the neck of my wetsuit down to get as much water in as I could. That helped a lot, but now I had lost the pack and I was still a little panicked so I just had to settle into a steady pace until I had got my breathing under control which was around the halfway point. I could then pick it up again and try and reduce the deficit. I exited the water just over 30sec off the main pack of contenders and 1min off the trio of super swimmers.

Even with the little miss hap in reflection I'm quite happy with that swim and have my swimming buddies to thank for that (Alicia Kaye, Helle Frederiksen and Patrick), for pushing me in training. On to the bike and I could see most of the guys up the road so I just settled down and started the chase. I first caught Paul Ambrose and then had Ben Hoffman in my sights but he also had the group in his sights so he was catching them as I was catching him. I caught Ben just after he had bridged to the main pack so now there was a group of about 7-8 with the likes of Greg Bennett, Tim Don, Callum Millward, Richie Cunningham, Joe Umpenhower, Jimmy Seear and now Ben Hoffman and I (see pic). I sat at the back of this pack until the 27km mark and then I just wanted to go, so I put in a solid attack in the hopes of getting away or at least shelling a few guys. It worked, I slowly pulled away from the group and then could see the lone leader, Davide Giardini who was first out the water. He was riding well so it took another 5km to catch him and again when I did I sat legally behind him and assessed the situation (the great thing about long course racing is you really have time to think things over). At about the half way mark of the ride I decided to go for it and see what happens. My watts had dropped below my target of 300 and HR had settled so it seemed a good move. And I think it was. I slowly extended my lead over the next 45km and the only gauge I got was with about 12km to go on a small out and back where I could see the field had splintered. Callum was riding solo in 2nd and then everyone was either solo or just in pairs. This gave me hope. If there had still been a pack I would have known there would be some 'power saving' going on. My time for the 90km was 2.01.23 which is the fastest I've ever ridden and the second fastest ever on this course which is pretty cool as a lot of the legends have raced this.

Off the bike I felt good, running through transition I felt I had a good bounce. On with the Asics Hyperspeeds and a head of me was 21.1km of pain and suffering. Within the first 1km my quads tightened and I started to question if I had ridden too bloody hard but I worked my way through this with the help of the last few Horleys replace gels that I brought over to the states. I think I must have been running quite well as I expected them to pick me off pretty quick but I stayed in the lead until about the 14km mark where fellow countryman Callum Millward took the lead. I tried to hold on to 2nd but with 2km to go the flying Tim Don took that away from me and I had to settle for 3rd, which at the end of the day I was very happy with. Second Ironman 70.3 podium of the year and this time in a bigger higher quality field and within 30sec of the reigning North American 70.3 champion. Hats off to Callum, he had a superb day and thoroughly deserved the win. And to add to the excitement of the day, training bud, and friend Alicia Kaye destroyed the women's race and I was so happy for her



Next up for me is Buffalo springs
70.3 in 2 weeks.
Until then
Thanks for the support
Regards,
Mark



Photo Credit:Andrijan Smaic (Sustain Bars)

NAME	COUNTRY	DIV RANK	OVERALL RANK	SWIM	BIKE	RUN	FINISH
Millward, Callum	NZL	1	1	00:24:19	02:03:53	01:16:30	03:46:47
Don, Tim	GBR	2	2	00:24:12	02:05:25	01:16:25	03:48:11
Bowstead, Mark	NZL	3	3	00:24:47	02:01:23	01:20:07	03:48:34
Cunningham, Richie	AUS	4	4	00:24:14	02:05:14	01:19:10	03:50:57
Hoffman, Ben	USA	5	5	00:24:42	02:05:16	01:21:15	03:53:23
Russell, Matt	USA	6	6	00:29:22	02:03:56	01:18:08	03:53:55
Ambrose, Paul	AUS	7	7	00:24:48	02:07:11	01:21:28	03:55:34
Giardini, Davide	ITA	8	8	00:23:18	02:05:20	01:26:30	03:57:29

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