

NSW Pro Tour – Round 7

This time last year, after getting incredibly bored of running lap after lap of Bondi Beach Australia, I made the decision to give a triathlon a crack. To think I would be given the chance to race in the NSW Pro Tour was a little hard to believe after only 8 months. So given that I didn't believe it, I chose to live in a very happy state of denial leading up to the race to avoid giving myself a heart attack.

Race Day

I met Spot to do a swim warm up before registration, and so I didn't have to worry if I didn't get a chance to warm up closer to the race. I went for a swim and felt great, despite getting eaten alive by sea lice. – I did however learn that just because you feel great in a warm up doesn't mean you will feel great in the race.

As people slowly started to rack their bikes, and slowly stripped off to their race suits with their names and goodness what else plastered across them – I was overcome with complete and utter fear. I was looking for any excuse not to do it, and with only 10 minutes before we started I couldn't think of anything good enough.

The race was an eliminator style race of 300 swim, 8km ride, 2km run with a semi final and then straight to a final starting 6mins after the first girl crosses the line. They were taking 8 through to the final, and the advice was if I was sitting in 9th of 10th to go for it on the bike, and if I blew up on the run it didn't matter because I gave it shot.

As the gun went off, I was so concerned about staying on their feet, everything I had been working over the past couple of weeks had gone out the window. My stroke rating was high, I felt so uncomfortable in the water, and worst of all the negative thoughts were pounding in my head. I came out of the water with two other girls behind the front pack – which put me LAST. Sitting in this position was the image I had been trying to get out of my head for the last few weeks.

Slowly up the stairs, and into to transition I headed out with a 2 girls and we worked together to attempt to slowly catch up to the front pack. We soon became a group of three as the last girl out of transition caught us, and we soon went past another girl who had blown up. On lap 7 of 8, I quickly did my numbers I was in 9th with two girls not too far in front. I needed to break away from the pack, to have any chance of running the girls in front down. With the help of a cow bell, a whistle and a group of screaming maniacs, I broke away from the back markers on the final lap, and edged a little bit closer to the two girls I had to be in front of to qualify for the final.

Out of transition and on the run, after a rubbish swim, and tactics on the bike I wasn't used to, I was happy to be running, I felt good and for the first time during the race I felt in control. I edged closer to the 2 girls and at about the 750m mark I was well in front of them, and began to settle into a rhythm and attempted to get my heart rate down, without letting them gain on me. I had qualified for the final – and to be honest, I didn't think I had a hope in hell of making it.

It took so much out of me mentally and physically to make the final 8 that with only 3 minutes to get my goggles and cap out of transition and have a gel – the second race was... interesting.

The swim, I held on to the back and watched as the front girls weaved and had to back track to go around the 2nd buoy. (Friday morning drills work) Onto the bike, and Amy Wilkinson and I worked together for the first 5 laps, but she was a lot stronger on the bike, and she slowly pulled away.

Onto the final run, I was hurting and I am sure there are plenty of photos to validate this statement. Despite my world of pain, and coming a very convincing 8th and getting a tunnel to run through was pretty damn funny and I think for the first time the whole day I cracked a smile. I finished 8th in the final, and was so lucky to have all my wonderful friends and my Mum and Dad there to be part of what is a massive step in my life as a triathlete and in just over an hour of racing I learnt more than I could ever have imagined.

What I learnt

1. I am so lucky to be able to train with such a crazy bunch of people who are so supportive of me, in everything that I do... I would have been lost without you all on Saturday
2. Listen to Spot – His advice, and support the week leading up and especially on race day was priceless. I was beyond nervous and he calmed me down, and gave me the advice that helped me get into the final.
3. I have a long way to go to be in the mix with those girls
4. I can't wait for the next race



