

## Jessey The Elf – June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 – Welland Sprint Race Recap

Multisport Canada Triathlon Series - WELLAND - Race Recap 🏊🚴🏃🎅😊

I am an Elf, and prefer older methods of communication such as letters to Santa, telephone calls, or messenger owl... Although I now have Facebook, Instagram & Twitter - I have yet to get a "blog" or one of those fancy "websites" up and going - so this will be a long Facebook post... trying to keep it short, but you know how enthusiastic elves are!!! 😄😄😄🎅❄️❄️❄️❄️ \*keep scrolling or read on\* and I apologize for grammatical errors- the wifi on the Polar Express gets a little glitchy in spots!

Let me start by saying, if you are interested in triathlon or duathlon, are a beginner or a seasoned pro (such as this elf over here) this course is for you!!! Welland makes pancakes seem hilly! This course was the flattest course I have ever done! (Perhaps aiding in my 44km/hr avg bike speed, and huge run-off-the-bike PB of 16:30 😄😄)

Getting to Welland from the GTA was easy as - putting a Christmas present in a gift bag with tissue paper and choosing not to wrap it - by printing off the race directions from MSC's website. I usually am the first one in transition (the parking lot so-to-speak where you park your bike and leave all of your race equipment you will need for the race)... but on Saturday morning I was 8th into transition! Crazy!

Even at 6am the atmosphere was set - all of the volunteers and Race crew were eager to help, greeting you with a smile (just like home for me at the North Pole). The first item you receive is a numbered bracelet for your wrist and a matching one for your bicycle. This is the only race series I have seen that does this and is a huge comfort and peace of mind (post race when leaving with your bike the race crew checks to see that your wrist number matches your bike number so only you can leave with your bike). Last summer at a triathlon training camp my bike was stolen from me and I've been very paranoid since, but this added bike security is very reassuring!!!

The check in process is smooth and concise:

You check the nice list (or naughty list for some of you cheeky duathletes) for your name and race number.

Then you rack your bike on the appropriate rack and all of your competitors smile at you while they eye-up your entire bike (this happens at all races, but MSC athletes smile more)

Next you head to BIB number pickup where all of the race volunteer "elves" are in bright yellow and ready to help you.

You get your stocking (race kit) filled with goodies and trinkets like none other! Still with 6 months til' Christmas - it gets better!

If you registered early enough you get a flashy race t-shirt that smells of fresh cotton and is now your new favourite shirt for the summer! 🧦😄😄

Then one of my favourite parts!!!- you are given a very special piece of coloured latex - your swim cap! And shown your wave start time. 🌊

Finally, your timing chip for you ankle, and then a volunteer draws your number, age, and even a little smiley face on your body. 😊

Just like registration, the rest of the event is smooth and very well run.

The flat water center was the host to the PanAm 2015 games rowing, and had hundreds of seats for spectators to watch the entire swim, parts of the bike and of course the finish. Truly unlike any other venue in Ontario for triathlon!

Any regular pre-race nerves are quite minimized in the MSC series with genius Announcer Steve Fleck cracking jokes to put you at ease, while also providing lots of valuable course information before the event gets underway.

A few final words from race director [John Salt](#), and the stage is set for a great, FUN, safe and fast race.

### **SWIM:** 🌊🌊🌊🌊🌊

the swim is super fast and calm! No waves, shoreline always close by, and even rowing buoys and cables to follow the whole swim, it's basically like swimming in a giant pool with a Wetsuit! Out of the water with lots of lifeguards and kayaks for safety, you run in front of cheering fans to your bike in transition.

(Personal swim - 1st out, fastest 750m swim in 9:45)

### **BIKE:** 🚲🚲🚲🚲🚲🚲🚲🚲

The bike is a double out and back, super flat (with a little wind... it is Welland after all). Racing this course for the first time I wasn't worried, extremely well marked and tons of volunteers to guide you. Lots of signage, and every 5km was marked.

\*only trouble for me was that I was cycling faster than anticipated by the police controlling traffic, and was told to turn at an intersection I was supposed to go through. Not the races fault, the police weren't prepared for my 27:10 20km bike, went 1km off course to end up 28:44 - still the fastest bike split of the day 😊:) \*\*

### **RUN:** 🏃🏃🏃🏃🏃🏃🏃

Leaving transition your name is announced and it gives you a boost as you start the pancake flat run! The aid stations have water and electrolytes handed to you by excited volunteers that yet again give you a boost!

(Wearing my famous elf hat I got lots of crowd support and cheering! Giving me the support necessary to run 3:18's/km off the bike).

Running through the huge finish chute and big gate is a big key to this series feeling like a big world class race, in a supportive local setting.

Race director John Salt is always at the finish to greet you with a handshake and smile - and this year every racer got a BIG SHINY finisher medal 🏆 to celebrate a race well done 🍷🍷🍷 a unique Canadian 🍁 design to show proudly to your friends and family after the race.

A really cool thing that MSC does is prior to the race they choose finishing places for prizes... for example: "the 100th person across the line receives a NEW Wetsuit!" Or #185 gets new

Skechers Performance running shoes!!! A really cool random way to give away awesome sponsor prizes fairly!

I can go on and on about Welland, but with Gravenhurst on the horizon - it's time for you to stop reading about the elf recap and sign up NOW to get your Swim CAP!

Thank you all so much for reading about #welland on #wellandwednesday and I look forward to seeing you out training, and at MSC events all summer long!!!

Your favourite tri-ELF-lete,

~ JESSEY THE ELF ~



p.s. pictured is the epic finish arch, the happiest and friendliest MSC ambassador team you will come to know, an elf on the podium in an elf hat, and proud athletes I coach with finish hardware around their necks with pride!

