

## You can still PB...When you DNF

Dany Malley, June 25, 2017

Over the last 9 months months, training has been very inconsistent due to finishing my basement, planning a wedding, then getting married. This morning I raced the Welland Long Course Triathlon, all week my wife watched me pacing around the house so nervous, as it was my first triathlon in quite some time, and 3rd time swimming since Barrelman! This is my third time racing the Welland Long Course (formerly a half iron distance) and it seems to get better every year! It offers the absolute best swim conditions such as no chop, and even an underwater line you can follow if you aren't the best at sighting. On the bike, although it's open to high winds, a course can't get more pancake flat than this one, so it's amazing when you want to improve your bike splits, or like me just feel like you're going fast. Lastly the run offers a 3 lap, super flat run around the canal, although it can get hot, it's fast and great for spectators as they can comfortably sit in the bleachers as the runners pass by 3 times. I highly, and I mean highly encourage other triathletes to give this event a try. If you are newer to the sport, the Spring might be a better fit for you to look into, as the course is somewhat similar in terms of it's swim and flat bike/run.

As for my race today, as the title says it may not have ended too well, but I was able to leave the race feeling pretty good. My swim was exactly as I was expecting, if not better based on not training in the pool at all. The bike portion was amazing, the volunteers on the course couldn't have been better, they were all very supportive cheering for the athletes which always helps. I was able to set a new PB (on the bike) for myself which was rewarding as I have worked quite hard on the bike over the past few months. This is where it started to go downhill...

I was feeling amazing getting into the run, and within 5 seconds, BOOM! My left calf completely buckled on me, something i've never experienced in a race before. I finished the first lap 3 minutes behind pace. After stopping to stretch hoping I'd be able to have a strong final 10k, I ran the next lap, to only have more pain in that leg. Well friends, all I can say is, I dropped out of a triathlon for my first time. But I learned a valuable, and extremely important lesson. EAT MORE SALT! I was having an amazing race, but it turns out it was just simple cramping.

What pleased me the most though was all the volunteers, runners, and spectators clearly seeing I was struggling prior to stopping and all encouraging me to continue, or going the extra mile to provide me a bit of extra support. Although I didn't finish, I was very happy with the race, and am excited for the next one! (with salt tabs).

At the end of the event this race provides exceptional post-race food including some delicious pizza! The medals are absolutely beautiful and being such a big race series they have a number of sponsors so you've got a good shot at even winning some great post-race prizes! If any of my fellow athletes out there have any questions regarding triathlons and want to give them a try contact me and let's go for a ride together, I guarantee if you come to 1 event, you'll go to many more! Happy training!