

Lakeside is calling.....and I must go!

MultiSport Canada Lakeside is a great family event with lot's of cheering room and space for kids to play! Our day started bright and early with my good luck 'runcakes', coffee and the quick drive from Kitchener to the small community of Lakeside, just off the 401 by Woodstock. The air was quite chilly, and I was glad to have remembered to dress in many layers! One thing that really caught my attention was the volunteers that helped to make this race a success! From the parking attendants, to the young lad handing out wrist bands/bike bands to those helping with food and registration.....there are never a shortage of good folk that work hard at our MultiSport races to ensure the day is a success! My daughter Sophie and her friend were able to volunteer and even collect a few hours for their volunteer high school requirement!!

The transition area was a grassy spot just off the road, and I was able to check my bike in and get my equipment ready to go without any issues. Bib in hand, body marking complete, I strapped on my chip and was ready to go! There were a number of athletes that would compete in the Olympic distance Duathlon the following day that came to cheer on the sprint athletes! That was a nice treat for us as we bolted out of the start to the hoots and hollers of our friends that usually race with us!

The first run of the sprint Duathlon follows the road along the family campground and is packed gravel. I focused on settling in after an ambitious first km and was conscientious to not step in any pot holes. There was lot's of volunteers at the hydration stations to help out with either water or F2C electrolyte drinks! Rolling terrain took us out to the the turn around mark, and then to our final leg back to the transition area. Spectators were able to line the road for quite a way, which always helps with motivation! You run down a grassy channel beside the finish chute, across the timing mat and into transition. I accidentally ran down the wrong bike rack lane (rookie mistake LOL) and had to zip around the end of the line to get my bike :0( Shoes off, helmet on and I was off through the bike out mat. Now - I have been diligently working hard on my mount since Kingston, where I nearly fell after the mount line attempting to do a flying mount onto my bike! Several months, a few bruises, and a few races later - I sailed up and over and onto my seat without a hitch! Yessssssssss! Just

a quick tip that really helped me - REALLY make sure you run quite a distance past the mount line, past the congestion, so you have all the room you need to get on your bike! I can't stress enough what an important lesson this has been!

The bike was rolling hills, with a few speedy downhill sections and quite a bit of wind! I concentrated on finding lines where the pavement was a bit smoother. The road conditions are typical of a well-loved country paved road, so I was mindful of looking ahead and riding with care. OPP volunteers marked the few turns, and we were heading back for the final run.

I have to say that the rollers and gravel on the first run, and the windy bike leg had me feeling a bit discouraged at my performance, every time I glanced at my Garmin! This was a race for me, where I had to sort of dig through my frustration to find my strength for a positive second run. I'm not sure why this happened for me at this particular race, in this particular distance since I usually race the Olympic Du.....was I simply fatigued from racing and training and working, or was it simply a case of just having to dig a bit deeper for the performance I knew I was capable of? That's the funny thing about this sport - your body and mind have a tricky way of fighting one another sometimes and you really just have to make your mind up to find a few more watts or run a little faster!

I tried to focus on turning over my legs with a bit more speed and find that rhythm in my cadence quickly as I headed out the same road as I did on my first run. I hit the water station for a bit of a drink, and I was at the turn around and on my way to the final approach to the finishing chute. I always marvel at athletes that, despite having the challenge of their own race, seem to find a bit of energy to say just the right thing in your moment of struggle. A gentleman clearly saw this in me as he ran by and yelled out "don't let me pass you"! I try to take these moments that mean so much to me and pass them forward in my own races! I think that this is my responsibility as an athlete and Ambassador and simply just as someone who has been on the receiving end of this gesture so many times, and truly recognizes the impact it has had on many of my race moments!!! Thank

you to that gentleman stranger, who ever you may be, whose encouraging words really made a difference!!

I always get excited when I can see the crowd and know the finish line is not far ahead. At Lakeside, you actually can't see the finish line, because you have to make a hard right hand turn and into the finishing chute. The crowds cheered us all on as we made our final approach - and as quickly as the race had begun, it was over and I was surrounded by high-fives and hugs!

I enjoyed MultiSport Lakeside. I enjoyed the atmosphere and the course, and although not my best race - I enjoyed the mental challenge Lakeside gave me.....of having to put aside my gripes and groans, and truly rally my gumption and fortitude to push on down the road to a solid finish.

Again the highlight was helping in the medal presentation, where I am always grateful to be a part of all of your journeys and successes, and spend a few moments celebrating your Lakeside journey!!!!

Thanks for a terrific race Multi Sport Canada!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!