



## RACE REPORT

### PETER KEIGHERY 2008 PANTHERS IRONMAN AUSTRALIA

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This was my A race after an 18 month lead up.

My first Ironman was at best painful, but there was Unfinished Business (as Caff would put it).

I was not going to coach myself this time. I needed to get a Pro.

I found Mat Tippett (ETPA) from the Western Suburbs Tri website.

So the journey began.

#### **The race in brief:**

Swim	1:04:26	328 <sup>th</sup>
T1	3:27	
Bike	5:49:09	448 <sup>th</sup>
T2	3:09	
Run	4:20:18	576 <sup>th</sup>
Overall	11:13:53	450 <sup>th</sup>

#### **Race Morning**

The nice guy Jimmy D arrived to pick me up at 4:55am then on to Komo and Caff's place before dropping us off at the course. As we arrived the rain started and T1 started to look like the swim course. Good start to the day! So the wetsuit went on early, off to pump up the tyres up and get the nutrition on the bike. I then packed the gear bag and headed to the swim start. I kept an eye out for Caff and Komo before the start to wish them well, but I could only find Komo (insert Caff joke about being lost in the land of the giants). So I wished Komo well and off to the water we went.

#### **Swim**

I had a blue cap this year which meant I was starting in the first group after the Pro's. The time I submitted at race entry might have been a bit fast, optimistic, maybe a damn right lie? The last Ironman I started at the back with a yellow cap and ended swimming an extra 50 to 75 meters before the start. So this time a sub 60 minutes time was submitted to get closer to the line.

While waiting for the start (all of about 2 minutes after being called into the water), I noticed the current was moving at a fast rate of knots up the Hastings river. This was good to swim with but man are we going to work hard to come back! The gun went and I started the 3.8km swim at a controlled

but fast pace until some joker decided to hit me in the mouth as I was trying to suck in some air. Instead of air I got flesh and salt water. So if you know me, this meant fish feeding time, as my oats from breakfast came flowing out (First chuck so early, bummer). After the kick I was a little more cautious around the buoys, which meant breaststroke with a wide kick pattern to keep all the directional retarded swimmers at bay. This is when I noticed that the wedding ring was working its way off the finger. It must be the cold water (not the "junky" skinny race weight) I pulled the ring down on the finger and had to keep the fingers together for the remainder of the swim. OK rounded the buoy and started the swim back to town. A boat anchored near the turn buoy seemed to just stay there! This current was fast ...faster than me...so what to do. I looked around and found a close pack of swimmers swimming faster than me and I slotted in behind for a tow. The boat moved on and in no time we had completed the first lap. I had a look at the watch and I knew the time was a little slow (33 minutes). The second lap was better as all the swimmers had been strung out over the course. I tried to keep the glide long and relaxed. This helped and the breathing was down to every third/ fourth stroke and as I found out later, the heart rate was 10 beats lower than any other race swim I have done in the past. The end of the swim loomed up and I made a conscious effort to not run fast into T1, this was to keep the heart rate down, as the day was a big one and a couple of seconds would not help. Up the ramp and a walk through the shower, Time 1:04, Nice 9 minute PB

## **T1**

I found my bag and trotted into the change tent and sat down on the end row of seats. The very helpful volunteer helped me dry my feet and I tried to get my socks on. Tried was the word, as I bent down the world turned upside down and I nearly ended up doing a face plant into the ground, except for the volunteer dragging me back to the seat saying "Don't worry mate the last guy ended up on the ground". Well this time I let him help me put the socks and bike shoes on and I put the helmet and sunnies on. Now off out of the tent and into the arms of the sunscreeners. Yep they sunscreen you as you leave the change tent and also offer you a drink. Now that's service! Time 3:47 OK

## **Bike**

I found the bike and off I went running towards the exit where I saw the family waving and cheering me on. This sort of energy is what makes the day seem bearable.

OK now ride through town and start the hills, but hold the excitement. I love hills but I'm under strict instructions (Maty Tippett) to keep the HR in zone and not go nutso. I've done that before in Shepparton and I can tell you it hits bad in the run! And I don't want that in the marathon. As I rode out past the golf course, I had Matt Lewis Give me a tap on the back and a "keep up the good work" as he rode past at a great rate of knots. This is the time to find a tempo and get some Carbs into you. Nice and steady don't overload the system. (I'm good at that!) At the first turn around, I was feeling good, but was still a little cold. I should have put the arm warmers on. There seemed to be a few punchers out on course, so I kept running the fingers over the tyres to help keep them free of class etc. This was the time I realised I had forgotten to close the rear valve and I had not taken the right angle off the pump. (needed for the pitstop). Bugger! so as I rode, I could feel the tyre going down! I would get out of the saddle and jump up and down to see if the rear was going down. And each time it was ok. I just had to hope it was ok for the down hills and corners. Coming back into town was great with the crowds going wild and the energy was electric.

First lap down, feeling good and spot on time.

As I rode out of town I was thinking where is the family? At Shelly beach, there they were with a

banner "Go Pistol Pete you son of a gun 760". Now this gave me a boost like no other and a warm inner glow, which only a supportive family can give.

I would do these guys proud! As I rode out passed the golf course the rain started and all I could think off was how cold I was and Komo had brought the rain again!

The rains kept coming until we got to Catie were the road was wet and slippery. This made you slow down around the corners and not riding the down hill so hard. About 2 km from the turn around, I had Komo give me a burst "Go Pistol", which gave me a bit of a scare. I must be starting to zoning out. Is it boredom or is my carb intake not up to speed? I think it was the carbs because I downed some carbs and the fog cleared in the head. The funny thing was, the body was feeling OK but the mind was not. I made a mental note to keep up the carbs on a more regular base as the mind starts to wonder and the emotions start to feel like a roller coaster. Then the Caff boy flashed passed looking good and fresh giving the "C'mon Pistol" and the reply "Go Caff Crank it"!

The second time coming into town was a concern, as light house hill was wet and as I got out of the saddle to push up the steepest part the rear wheel lost grip and I nearly used the top tube as a nut cracker. Will I do a Jacs and end up on my ass? Somehow, I was able to "get a grip" of things and keep it upright. The crowd on the hill were going spastic, yelling and running along side saying "you can do it". Though, you knew they were just like motor racing fans, just waiting for the Crash! Back through Shelley beach and past the Pistol Pete fan club..Nice!

Lap 2 down and feeling OK.

The ETPA crew in town gave us all the rev up as we rolled by. The 3<sup>rd</sup> lap was better weather wise but the "Get me out of here" feeling was starting wage war on the senses. I applied some sunscreen this lap and found out that if you don't wipe your hand properly, the sunscreen makes your end levers very slippery. By the last turn around (30km to go) my neck and back were cramping. I tried to move around, but on the bike there isn't far to move! The ride back to town was a good time to start thinking about the run and getting the last of my carbs into me. (I was also getting sick of the carb drink and wanted something to chew on) Back through town, past the Pistol Pete fan club for the last time on the bike and into the transition area. I got off the bike with pleasure and handed it over to the pit crew (yep someone grabs your bike and racks it for you)

Bike time 5:45 Nice 1 hour PB.

I found my run bag and ran into the change tent. Yes you guessed it, there was someone there to help out by handing you your fresh socks, runners and carb gels.

As you run out of the tent there were the "sun screeners" again, and a gent handing out some drinks. (Thou I had thought Caff had arranged for the Pure blonde girls)

## **T2**

3:09 Not fast but ok

## **The Marathon**

The first 1km you know the legs will feel strange and weak but they will come good.

Well for me the first 400 meters felt like I was running on numb legs, No spring and no rhythm. But then it all came together and it felt good to run, just like all those big bricks I had done with Caff. The funny thing was I had to slow my self down a little and not get carried away with the emotion of the

race. At the first turn around, I could see Caff looking good and with a "Go Caff" we passed. Back into town and past the circus of the finishing Shoot and this is where I spotted the Pistol Pete Fan club. The family (Jana, Josh, Jai and brother James) had relocated from the bike course to now be near the mouth of the river. Man you think you're strong, until you see them and the emotions run wild.

As I composed myself, I realized I was going through my Gel faster than planned and I would finish it before the end of the first 14km loop of three. Mmm what to do? Do I slow down just in case I'm going down the GI upset path or just continue and see? I thought I would just see, as I was feeling good and if I started to feel ill, I would plan for that then. Just up from the Pistol fan club was the ETPA crew (Coach Mat Tippet, chaperone Jimmy D, Fay, Emma and Ross, Big Boy, Caff's better Half ...and Komo's wife and Girls). They gave the "You're looking good keep it going" even though you could be half dead. Having said that it all helps on race day! Now the fun part up the hills and then back down into town. The thing was I felt ok on the first pass of the hills! A little tired but OK! I hit the turn around and the Caff was still charging along and looked to have moved closer. (Maybe we would run to the finish together after all the training we did?) It's a funning thing Ironman, you might want to run with someone, but once you're in the zone, it's best to just keep going.

Lap 1 down 1:14 Faster than planned. Great!

Back out to the river turn around and I could tell I was slowing down! The head was good but the body was starting to feel heavy (after 8hour I don't know why?). I got to the same point as before were Caff was on the first lap and he had caught up a little. As I came back into town, the chuck feeling was starting and so the plan was to slow the Carbs which I had almost finished my marathon quota. I saw the 22km to go sign and my heart sank. How can I do this? I ran past the Pistol Fan club again (Tried to look relaxed and composed as I didn't want the family see me suffer). As I ran past team ETPA the coach asked the question on how I was feeling and the reply was "Sick". Well, I got some advice in the usual Tippet fashion "run harder and get rid of it" And the advice was good! I ran the first hill harder then I did the first time and by the time I got to the second I was down on my hands and knees doing the 'Linda Blair'. I was amazed how much fluid was in my stomach. And it kept coming until I called Hueeeeeeeeeee a number of times. At this point I realised I was next to a young family in the park cheering on the competitors. I really didn't care, but they did and they had looked up my number and were urging "Pistol Pete you can do it" then they called across the road to their friend to help Pistol Pete as he needs some help! Now what could I do? I just had to get up and keep moving. And as the New Pistol Pete fan club urged me on from both sides of the street, I started to jog slowly up the hill to the turn around.

I tried to eat, but couldn't, so I went for the Gatorade with half water. The stomach was ready to purge, so all I could do was to slowly jog. As I started to move slowly towards town I saw Caff again in a similar spot maybe closer to last time. If I was having problems Caff must have been as well or he had a skinny latté and a doughnut on the way through town.

Lap 2 Down 1:35 Not good and feeling like crap.

As I moved out of town my head was spinning and I couldn't focus. I knew this was low blood sugar so I had to get something into me. At the next aid station I got a hand full of jelly beans and even though I really couldn't stomach it I chewed them and put them under my tongue. (something Caff had passed to me from a Mitch Anderson article he had read). And yep it started to work, the mind started to clear but the legs were still dead. So at the next aid station (also the turn around) I went

for the Jelly beans again, but to my surprise or more like dismay there were none. I almost cried (maybe I did a little...I blame the low blood sugar), they were my savour. I must find something else I could stomach. Rock melon was the choice and it went down ok but the beans were what I needed. Caff was sighted again and he was making ground slowly but he was plodding away in his own world of pain. All I could do now was hope at the next aid station they still had some jelly beans. (Has my life come down to wishing for jelly beans?) "Yes yes yes" as Sally said in sleepless in Seattle. They had my jelly beans. So I grab two handfuls and some coke. Yep the stomach was getting a little better, so I could get more carbs in.

It was at this point that I remembered an email from Komo saying "*If it hurts to walk and it hurts to jog and it hurts to run, phuk it, run FAST!*" So off I went and as a fellow competitor ran past me I moved in behind and let him do the pacing. I was able to hold on to him until we got to town and my energy ran low again. Now only 6 km to go, only the hill between me and the end. I grabbed more Jelly beans and coke at the next aid station and off to the hills. My head had stopped spinning but I knew the pace I was going would give me grief later, but I could only hope I could finish it off. I ran through the aid station at the last turn around and looked for Caff. Mmm not at his usual spot? Lets hope the boy was ok! It was a couple of minutes until I saw him running up the last hill. He was smiling, but you could sense he was in pain. "Keep it going Caff" I yelled out "Not far to go". I was now running as fast as I could without falling over. I could see the lights being turned on, as the sun sets, the officials pin glow sticks to the runners for safety. To quote Caff "This race is a no glow zone". I could sense the end of the race was near, the crowd was fantastic. Then as I ran past the shops for the last time, I saw my brother James yelling his heart out with a phone attached to his ear, with one of my sisters passing encouragement on. Throughout the day my other brother Greg was calling Jana with updates from the Ironman Live website.

The finishing Shute loomed out of the gloom with loud music and the crowd dancing and cheering in the grand stand. "Let's make the most of this" I thought and as I entered the carpeted area, I did the aeroplane, arms out stretched and I ran side to side (I saw the video later and there was not much side to side). In all the excitement I was trying to see the family, but I thought I must have missed them. As I ran over the line it was sheer pleasure and relief.

Mission accomplished. Lap time 1.29 Faster than the second.

Then, as I was getting the finishing medallion, I saw Jana and I had to go over to give her a hug. My poor wife and boys had watched, supported and endured the last 18 months of training and racing Ironman. This race was my choice, not theirs and still they gave me all the strength and support I needed. A big Thanks you, my darling wife and my two delightful children Josh and Jai. Also to the coach and crew I trained with over the 18 months thanks. Caff and Komo It's been a pleasure.

The final rap up

Run 4:20:18 576<sup>th</sup> 1 hour PB Nice to get of the feet

Overall 11:13:53 450<sup>th</sup> 2.06 hour PB Delighted

Pistol Out.