

TRIATHLON

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with Donovan van Gelder

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GEAR

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Cameron Wurf

SUMMER 2019
R69.90 incl. VAT



For people who **LOVE** triathlon



ROHAN MEYER

“I GAVE IT MY EVERYTHING”

It is race morning at the IRONMAN 70.3 World Championship. Around me millions of rands worth of bicycles and equipment are ready to be ridden like a horse into the sun, by sharp and pointy-headed aliens. It makes me wonder if I have pitched up for a triathlon race or a NASA mission. There's no time to be in awe of my fellow competitors' satellite equipment or to grieve the mission ahead. I need the toilet. Not after a long queue and especially not without toilet paper. Damn! No time to sit, it is go time!

The race? Well, we all knew that the swim would be congested. We all knew that the bike would be windy and undulating and would require a strong effort. And yes, we all knew that the run would be flat and fast. So I got told. But I don't think any participating athlete (not even the ones from Mars) expected the race to beat us up like we were stepchildren. Or am I the only fish and chips age grouper on this one?

Nonetheless, somehow my race went well. I swam a personal best, which set me up for a feel-good race. I went out hard on the bike, knowing that a tricky bike, because of the amount of old ballies already out there (due to the later start of my 25-29 age group), would be the deciding factor. The soon-to-be lead bunch of my age group (basically fellow citizens and training colleagues Ryan Schmitz and Tiaan Swart) passed me within the first few kilometres. I tried to sit with them but got shot out the back within two minutes. My power meter seemed faulty, reading strangely low



values. I was either being extremely aero or I lost heaps of weight before the race. I just ignored my power and kept the rest in check. I managed to keep the gap to a minimum and started the run about three minutes down to the front guys. But so did a Frenchman who ended up running a 01:12 half marathon, leaving me with a 10-second margin on him as he ran from 12th position into 2nd as we

approached the finish. My overall time of 04:03:13 was within a minute of my coach, Kent Horner's optimistic pre-race predictions, but never would I have been able to predict the unreal result. I am a happy man, knowing that I gave it my absolute everything – plus something additional in the last 3km of the run to blitz that Frenchie away and take the top podium spot in my age group!



ANDRE BEKKER

“I HAD ONLY ONE GOAL”

When I learned that Paul Wolff was making a bid for the 2018 IRONMAN 70.3 World Championship to be held in Nelson Mandela Bay, I immediately booked out our favourite guesthouse near Hobie Beach and changed my plans to focus on this event instead of Kona.

For two years I had only one goal: to come to Port Elizabeth and give 100% to race the very best I could. I read that if you want to serve yourself in the sporting world, do it for others, not yourself. That resonated with me and, from that moment on, I thought I couldn't let my wife Julie down; she has done so much for me and has built a life around me. It's support like you cannot buy.

As the race got closer I realised how many people wanted me to do well. It was humbling and inspirational. I thought that I would rather die in the race than let others down; fantastic friends, fantastic support, but huge pressure.

The vibe in Port Elizabeth was great, but very different to what I'm used to at African Champs. Athletes from around the world brought a completely different feel to this event. I would walk into The Boardwalk and out again without knowing anyone, a strange feeling indeed for a regular PE competitor.

With Jan Frodeno, Javier Gomez and Alistair Brownlee in town, there was lots of excitement around the men's race on Sunday. But I have to admit that I was so focused on my own race that I hardly noticed anyone or anything at all. On race day I knew I had to give 100%, be lucky and suffer for 04:30. I am not

the most talented guy on the block; I just understand sport well and have an incredible work ethic, that's all. Even at the start, people came to me and said "you have got this". I wasn't sure what I had, but suffering was on the menu.

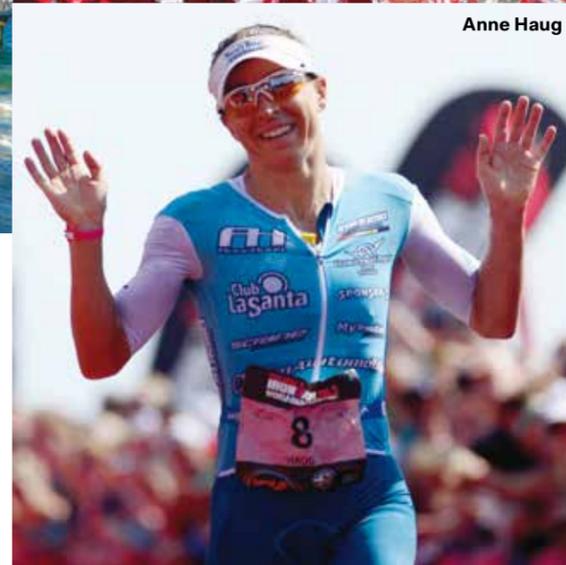
It was an honest course that got my attention. I swam as hard as I could and biked as hard as I could. The bike was a lot harder than I had anticipated, especially going out to the turnaround with a slight wind from the front. It felt like we were constantly climbing and my speed and intensity factor were distinctly decoupled. Coming back, all the motor pacing I had done kicked in, and yes, the wind was from behind, but I went a lot faster because of the specificity of my training.

I thought there was a real chance I would fall apart in the run. But I felt great! It's the best run course in the world and local knowledge played a part in how I attacked it. I had to tactically position myself to run off some of my competitors. They pushed me, and put me in a position where I functioned outside of my comfort zone. I constantly checked my effort, not heart rate or power, but my perceived effort rate, and I always thought I cannot go harder than this.

I finished the race knowing that I could do no more. I came close to the medical tent but decided the guest house across the road was a better place to collect myself. Nothing can come close to the happiness I saw on other people's faces – it is as if they did it – and nothing makes me happier than to see that. I am very fortunate to have such support. 🍌



Anne Haug



SA AGE GROUP PODIUMS

- MEN**
- 18-24** 1 JP Burger : 03:58:40
 - 25-29** 1 Rohan Meyer : 04:03:12
3 Ryan Schmitz : 04:03:59
 - 30-34** 2 Bryan Difford : 04:07:01
 - 35-39** 2 Donovan Geldenhuys :
04:10:52
 - 40-44** 3 Garron Mosley : 04:18:51
 - 55-59** 1 Andre Bekker : 04:35:14
 - 60-64** 2 James Welsh : 04:48:12
 - 75-79** 3 Ken Poole : 06:32:34

- WOMEN**
- 25-29** 1 Jade Roberts : 04:32:14
2 Mariella Sawyer : 04:48:07
 - 30-34** 3 Kirsten Schut : 04:39:02
 - 50-54** 1 Michelle Enslin : 05:09:32
 - 55-59** 3 Linda Potts : 05:26:07