

Detroit – June 25, 2006

The highly anticipated first Motor City Triathlon took place on Belle Isle, and while there were a few drawbacks, the race was definitely a success. There was a great deal of apprehension from many athletes over this event, much of which centered around the water quality, but also the two transition areas.

The swim however turned out to be quite nice. The water was a comfortable 68 degrees at the start, so wetsuits were allowed. The beach at Belle Isle is very nice, however the facilities needed some work and it would have been nice for 3 Disciplines to provide a few porta johns at the start. Many racers were forced to ride back to transition 2 to use the restroom. The water quality, which was very good, turned out to be the least of our worries. Heading out, we went upriver in a protected bay, then turned down stream for a long fast section, after that, we turned back to the shore, however, everyone was caught by the current and pushed quite a ways down stream. Our 1500 meter swim, turned out to be at least 2000 meters, and that last section was against the current.

Finally exiting the swim, I was quite exhausted after 44 min's. The first transition turned out ok, even though I had to fold my wetsuit and stuff it into plastic bag with my other gear before heading out on the bike. The transition area was setup on the grass adjacent the beach, and heading out you had to drop over a curb and cross two lanes before getting into the bike zone. Since the bike lanes were setup on the inside of the Belle Isle loop, passing was to the far right of the lanes, yet the volunteers didn't seem to understand that, since as I was clipping in, they wanted me to stay to the right and get run over by the riders already on course. During practice on the Isle, my speed was very fast, race day didn't go as well though. The first 1 ½ laps were rough. My calf's were really cramping, I don't know if I was slightly dehydrated or just too tired after that swim, but the cramping really slowed me down. Once I got that under control, the bike still didn't feel very good. There seemed to me to be a slightly nagging wind on the Canadian side of the island, which kept speeds down. The road quality was very good for the six mile loop. There were only two small sections of lower quality road and traffic never was an issue. There were a number of volunteers on the bike course which must have helped. The turn into the transition area was wide and clear heading in. It seemed that transition 2 was setup good for the racers. Since my relay partner took the chip as soon as I got in, I really didn't have to worry about it though.

Although I didn't experience first hand, I heard the run course was nice, shaded, and pretty, yet maybe a bit narrow on the trail. Also, I hear the buoy for the sprint races was moving in the current and so the sprint swim was quite tough since the buoy kept moving away as the swimmers approached.

The post race was the typical 3 Disciplines, granola bars, Gatorade, pizza, etc... There was no shade though and waiting for the awards to begin got a bit hot. Waiting went quick though since much of the team was there and as always, we had a good time talking and reviewing the race course and our own performances. For the first year, it's obvious 3D has some bugs to work out, but all in all, I'd say the race was a great success.