

Infinite Multisport Club NEWSLETTER

July / August 2006

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Club members rehash the inaugural Motor City Tri. Tell me about that swim!

From the Editor

Thank you all for the articles- if only every newsletter was this easy to publish.

New Club Members galore- too many to mention. Glad you're aboard and WELCOME.

Everyone had a great time at Paul and Sandy's. Thanks to you both for the food, fun, and frolic. Special Olympics raffle netted \$145 too.

Monthly Meeting

Club meetings are 3rd Thursday of each month. Next meeting: Aug 17th, Velodrome, Roch Hills <http://www.velodromeatbloomerpark.com>

Finding Our Way at Anchor Bay

By Joellen Haines

Two members of the club, Don Zimmer and Nancy Evans, participated in the July 8th Anchor Bay Triathlon, with Jon Haines (out by doctor's orders) taking a hand at photography and cheering his wife Joellen on in her relay with Nancy. Headquartered in the quaint but slightly fish-fly infested downtown New Baltimore, the race boasts a straight out and back 800 meter swim, 11 mile bike and 3 mile run.

Swimmers gathered to the right of pier amongst several overhead onlookers, and waded out for the announcement of the start of the race. Don

and Nancy both had great swims in the calm water and made the long trek up the beach and up a set of steps (ouch) to the transition area. The bike portion was well marked with the beginning a straight out down Main Street, over I-94 for a quick turnaround and back through a series of neighborhoods. There were a decent amount of turns and two full turnarounds on the course, making it a little tricky to get into a good rhythm, but it was a nice ride altogether. The run involved a shady tour through several side streets just north of town and was well staffed by volunteers offering water and just that jolt of encouragement you need to finish strong. It was nice that they used ChampionChip Racing System this year, and the race results were posted right away for the participants. Don came in second in his age group and Joellen and Nancy finished 5th in the team relay.

As a side bar, a local funeral home entered several teams and individuals who all wore matching royal blue shirts printed with "We're dying to win!" Watch out for that group, I think they might be serious. Anyway, everyone was very supportive and this race seemed to attract a lot more women than men, though it is traditionally a smaller event limited to about 250. As a piece of trivia, last year the City of New Baltimore used the money earned from the race to buy and build playground equipment for the park. It has really made the beach area and surrounding park an enjoyable place to take the whole family, so they are using the money for a good cause. Great job everyone!

A Different Kind of Race...

By: Ken Sanko

...with a different kind of pace. The 15th Annual Michigander bike ride took place over a mid-July weekend, consisting of hundreds of riders from all over the state. The Michigander is a bike tour with two riding options- a weekend or a weeklong ride. The ride is run by the Rails to Trails / Lansing. This "social" ride has overnight stops at some of Michigan's larger-small cities, allowing riders to experience things like tubing down the Muskegon River in Big Rapids, or enjoying the beauty of the lakeside town of South Haven. The Rails to Trails group does a

great job providing gear transport, meals, and sag support along the way.

As usual, I took part in the weekend ride making it my ninth. I'm a veteran of this ride, but for some reason got something unique and different out of this year's ride. For one reason or another all of my Michigander riding friends did not make this year's ride so it was another father-son ride just like the 2003 ride. On Saturday, July 15th, my dad and I headed up to the city of Ewart, Michigan at 6 am. After getting registered and a short safety meeting, REQUIRING helmet usage and requesting riders to NOT call out "All Clear" at street intersections along the trail for obvious reasons, my dad and I were off to the city of Big Rapids without a care in the world.

The 30-mile ride covered a west direction to the town of Reed City with a southern turn toward Big Rapids. The wind kept us cool as we headed west spotting large farms, cornfields, cows, sheep, horses, and bails of hay. The terrain and sights continued to change while the one constant which my dad and I really enjoyed was the lack of noise - no traffic, motorcycles, etc. only the sound of birds and other wildlife. It wasn't an hour into the ride when I commented to my dad how refreshing it was to be riding without being put up against a clock, or some kind of timer. We made a couple of small stops to take pictures here and there with our longest stop in Reed City. The Reed City volunteer fire department had rolled out the "Welcome mat" and had a large tent covering picnic tables providing us with ice water, yogurt, fruit, and best of all cookies/brownies. Even better than the food/drink, was their allowance of the riders to tour the fire station, ask questions, and use their restrooms. Thank you again Reed City fire department!!

Biking on, a downhill tree tunnel that seem to last for at least 2 miles highlighted the bike journey to Big Rapids. Between the trees one could see a swamp on one side with a lake on the other. I was mistaken when I thought it couldn't get any better. Shortly after the tree tunnel, I noticed two riders stopped off the trail looking up at the sky into the sun, as I got closer I could hear the words "There's a bald eagle..." Yep the eagle was floating around in a giant circle above our heads. Sweet!!! We finished the ride along the Muskegon River shortly after that around lunchtime.

After we put up our tent, and got cleaned up we headed into town for some lunch and activity. After lunch we walked the Main Street of Big Rapids looking for shade and attempting to stay cool since it was about 93 degrees. We found a jackpot in the form of a small cinema playing the movie "Cars" and based upon the movie starting time, our timing couldn't have been better. Sure enough it was a Michigander first for me, watching a movie and staying cool. Our evening after that was dinner back at the school, conversation with other riders, followed by a dip in the nearby river, and a walk back into town for some ice cream. A great day no doubt!!

The Sunday ride and morning was more of a game titled "Beat the Heat" since weather forecasters were calling for temps in the mid-90's with a lot of humidity so Dad and I got an early start. We got our gear back on the trucks, topped off our water bottles, and headed back. We took full advantage of the cloudy start to the day by stopping only twice, once at our new favorite fire station in Reed City and the other at a look out point next to a river. We enjoyed the same scenic ride and kept relishing the moments. The final picture that was taken was of my dad and I at the finish line at the Ewart High School. A great weekend consisting of 60 miles of biking was accomplished with a lot of good memories.

In reflecting upon this past weekend I feel very fortunate that my dad and I could enjoy all of it together. I also think the slowness of the ride left me with a recommendation that all of us should once in a while stop and enjoy a ride, run, or whatever without placing a clock against that activity. I've always loved to bike but it has been a long time since I realized just how much I enjoyed it...

Special Olympics 5k Run

By Sandy Leonard

It was a cruel morning. When I opened my eyes and realized I was racing, but I knew that my partners, Debbie and Sue, would be equally inspired. Our beloved president was looking a bit ashen due to the success of the party the night before. But, we all managed to get to the Special Olympics 5k run on time (that's right Don) and assaulted the course. For some reason my spirits revived as I ran with my two partners. The course was a mixture of bumpy field grass and paved pathway. I felt very good during the run, and it turned out short and sweet.

The best part was our president passing on the clubs check to the race director, made possible by the generous donations of our members the night before. I was proud of our group and proud to represent the club at the race.

I especially want to thank everyone for making the party the night before such a success - and it was great to have everyone in our home. Pictures will follow.

Happy Trails Triathlon Provides Scenic View for Competitors

Three club members braved the 1000 meter swim, 20k bike and 5k run at the Kensington Metro Park Happy Trails Triathlon on Sunday, July 23, 2006. Andy Fuchs finished 6th in his age group, Jon Haines finished 14th in his age group, *(Jon would like it noted, for the record, he was unable to workout for three weeks, due to concussion!)* and Dina Poma finished one place shy of a trophy in 4th place in her age group. It marks the first triathlon held in this beautiful park setting sponsored by the Carl's Family YMCA and offers a scenic but challenging course.

Although wet suits were originally not going to be allowed, the water temperature that morning at the farthest buoy was only about 76-77, so wetsuits were allowed for those who brought them anyway. The rectangular course allowed swimmers to spread out and minimize traffic, which made it more enjoyable for all. Women went out in the first two waves, followed by 3 waves of men, a good distance behind.

After a long run up the hill to the transition area, bikers took off for a hilly gear-changing trek. Jon thought it was a difficult course, but Andy said it was normal according to German standards. Dina thought it was a rough course that really hammered your leg muscles. Well, at least there was a lot of scenery to take their minds off their pain! As Jon said, "I was going up this monster hill and my legs were dying, then I looked over and said, Wow, that's a really awesome view!"

The group then took on the run, which was a real cross-country experience. They made their way through forest paths, up steep hills, and along the lake while running mostly on grass to reach their final downhill stretch to the finish. Everyone came in strong and looked like the pros that they are. The after race food was a classy event, with hot dogs, pizza, bagels, chips,

bananas, watermelon, Gatorade, and even Starbucks coffee (which made Dina very happy). Some of the raffle prizes included Detroit Lions tickets, but unfortunately, no one came home with any extra prizes, just the satisfaction of a great finish and outstanding effort. Because it's not too far away (about 1 hr from Clinton Twp) this race is highly recommended for next year, if they have it again. Let's hope they do!

Motor City Triathlon

Paul Leonard 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 on 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 1/2 laps were

rough. My calves 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.

My First Triathlon in the U.S.A.

A real story from Andy Fuchs

On June 21st I came back from my short business and vacation trip from Europe. These days were very happy and relaxing together with the family and seeing some friends. Unfortunately the flight back was really terrible. Coming from Munich I had to take a connecting flight in Philadelphia in order to get to Detroit. But because of a very short transfer time and a very loooong queue at the security check I missed my aircraft. The next possible flight was overbooked and so I had to stay the night in Philly; bad hotel, problems with the shuttle bus, but I caught the flight in the morning and had a very bad workday...but I knew a very big Event coming up: My first triathlon in America; the Motor City Triathlon on Detroit's Belle Isle! This is really a great location; a little island in the

middle of the Detroit River where you can see a wonderful skyline of Detroit downtown on one side and on the other there is Windsor, the southern end of Canada.

First of all I had some concerns starting at this race because it seemed to me that there were some differences between triathlons in the US and in Europe. One point is the costs; 65 dollars plus fee isn't very cheap (in Germany you will pay a maximum of 35 euros for a sprint race). Another thing is T1 and T2. What's that? Will they show a movie ("Terminator") at the finish area? No! While reading the race description carefully I learned that "T" stands for transition area and means the location to change from swim to bike or from bike to run! A second point was the biking. As I left my road bike in Munich I just had my cross bike for this race; so will there be some other mountain-bikers as well?

But then the race day came and Pat and Robin his wife (who did a great job as volunteer) picked me up in Rochester Hills and gave me a ride to Belle Isle.

Paul had picked up our starters packet on Saturday already, but we had to go to register our chips and to get marked with the individual start number. And here I recognized another difference; getting the number means also to get a mark with your age on your calf muscle as well! From now on the first thing I watched out on other triathletes was the number written on their calf ("Ah, this one is not my age group", "Wow, this lady looks much younger!" ;-)

But there was one misunderstanding: Like in Germany I thought the year of birth is the only interesting thing, so I started the race with the 35+ male swim group...

By the way there's another difference to the races in Europe; here is no fixed timeline, each group was called up for start. Unimaginable in Germany; e.g. the first group will start at 8.00, the second 8.05, then 8.10... and you can bet on it that they will start it punctual!

It was a nicely short swim in fresh water and with some seaweed in the face but I found my way back to the bank and ran to T1.

Biking on Belle Isle is totally flat, a wide road doing a 10km oval in this park; I had to ride two laps. A not to underrate influence during this race had the wind. Racing over the island in one direction you had some back wind and after turning around it blew hard in your face.



Due to the good organisation with a lot of volunteers I managed the bike and found T2. After changing into running shoes I started to the last section which was flat, too. A big advantage was the running track arrangement with a long forest section in shade. The only downer was the running distance; if I'm not totally wrong I could swear that this was longer than 5km!

But at the end I finished well after 01:24:04 and I received a cold finishers towel and a medal. And of course there was a great post race food tent with all standards and pizza as well!

After talking to the other club members and refuelling my body's energy storage the race results were published. But while reading the results I was wondering about my long swim time! And then somebody explained me that just the current age is relevant! Since my birthday will be in August I started in the wrong age group, but a short information to Anna from 3Disciplines corrected the results list and I was happy again.

In total it was a great triathlon near to the Detroit skyline and I'm looking forward to do my second triathlon in Michigan / U.S.A.!

Boy Did I Miss This!

Marc Barringer

It's been a long time since I've done this. I have not started a tri since my DNF and utter post-race collapse at IM-Moo in 2002. No wetsuit, no transitions, none of the fun.

So I had a few butterflies packing on Friday

night. My kids were helping (no, I meant get the white helmet), my wife was sewing (best to stay out of the way) and the cats were watch (dad, does this involve us getting tuna?). My wife's flight home was three hours late (sorry I missed the party :- () I remembered everything after five rehearsals, and even grabbed an extra tube.

I did my usual "now where do I turn to get there?" routine. See the Tim Horton's with many bikes on racks. This must be the place. Follow them. Arrive at the school and see Lake Huron. This is going to be ugly. There are whitecaps stacked back into the lake. The wind is coming straight off the lake and hear the words blown over "Due to the water conditions, the swim has been canceled. All athletes will be doing the duathlon." Leave the wetsuit in the van.

Got set up, checked in, goody bagged and changed into race gear. Looked for Gabbi and David J, but didn't see them before the race. Put on my running shoes and actually warmed up a bit. We were then given the famous Bluewater Tri "BBQ drafting explanation" at the race meeting, as well as a quick description of the Du run. We line up in front of the school, I seed myself to the back, and off we go. The bagpipes play as we leave.

I run through my strategy: do what simply feels right. I settle into my run pace at the BOP and just try to keep in touch. I know there's a few folks behind me, but I don't worry about them passing me. I just run (trot, plod, stroll) at the pace I've been using for marathon training. It's a 2.8k run though a neighborhood that snakes around the school. I make the second from last turn down what is part of the bike course, and hear a car speeding up behind me. The first thought is "Doesn't that idiot know there's folks not in car around here?" I step over to make sure I don't get hit, see the car pass, and hear a sound I haven't heard in a long time: the whir of carbon wheels. My brain then clicks in. Race control in front of the leader.

T1: Odd. No wet feet to clean. Buckle helmet first thing. Shoes, shades and a quick drink. Do the funny run to the mount point and get on.

Bike: Boy is it windy! It's almost a perfect 90 degree crosswind coming from our left. I get into the rhythm and go. A couple of folks pass me; I'm guessing they had mechanical problems. I start to check how the position feels, as this is my first race with this bike. A make a mental

note to change the seat yaw a little. I see a rider in front of me move way over to the left and cross the center line. I see why, the road is scratched up for repairs. I move over to avoid the patch, but not far enough I guess. I then hear the "ssssssssss" of the front tire going flat. Stop, fix, inflate, go.

The course then turns north. Into the wind. And it's still strong. Gear down and don't burn out of this. Just a few K and then you get a tailwind back. A couple little rises and dips and then the turnaround. The volunteers are waving flags and warning "loose gravel on both sides!" That I can avoid. Gear down a little more, slow, get a drink, turn and bring it back.

Now let's see what we can do. Big ring. Small cog. I then realize "you didn't set your watch!" Oh well. Just go. I start to finally catch people. Seven or eight on the way back. Turn back into the crosswind, but it seems like it quartering a little behind me. Keep hammering. See the 30k sign and turn back into the neighborhood. Drink again. Then I see runners. Off the aerobars. Still go quickly, but announce yourself.

I did have to cross the centerline once to avoid runners, but I doubt it will earn me a DQ. Get the feet out of the shoes and wiggle the toes. Maybe they'll talk with me again.

T2-I see the dismount line and wonder "should I have done a brick?" Probably. I get off and the legs feel like lead. Get to the rack, rack the bike, lose the helmet, grab two gels, put on shoes (and somehow tie them) and head out.

Run- Simple plan: "J.F.R." Even if it's slow, just keep at it. Use a gel on the way out of T2, and get a drink immediately. Take water if thirsty or it would just feel good dumped over. Some folks are out there with garden hoses and those are a nice help. I skip the water station at 4k-ish. The clouds of the morning are gone, and it's full sun. I do go off the course to run on the packed dirt along the side of the road. I also do my best to run in the shade as much as I can. I even catch a few folks. I did have to stop once to tie a shoe and another time to thank a volunteer who was being witty. I chased down two men running along just after 9k, and turned on everything I had left. The short turn into the park where the finish line is tells me to leave it all behind. I do and see the finish line. I start smiling. I did it. I'm back. 3:01:20, and a PR at 10K.

And now I'm hungry. My head is swimming a

little, but I feel great. Now I have to find another race before fall. I missed this.

