

Athy Duathlon Race Report

The initial date coincided nicely with a trip to Dublin to watch the rugby, however Storm Ciara put a stop to that plan. The race was postponed by 1 week only for Storm Denis to join that particular party. Credit to the race organisers for getting the race out of the blocks with this particularly difficult February.

Duathlons are fast and furious from the start, my plan was to run conservatively (read slower!) for the first run so as not to blow up before even getting to my bike. This is a struggle as pacing remains a notable blind spot of mine! A friend from the area had warned me of the likely head winds on the return leg of the out and back route so another warning to pace was heeded, now just the difficult task of actually executing said plan. A handy tip look, for anyone in the local club tri suit, a few tips could prove very valuable.

The wonderful February weather meant that I used the conveniently located indoor astro to do some warmup running, and was glad of the hat, buff and jacket, just a word of warning for your duathlon packing!

The run route was the same for both and when they said flat they weren't lying however Storm Denis made the first half feel like resistance running. Onto the bike, I did remember how coach had said to



try the flying mount but the presence of a camera at transition meant I chickened out! Headwinds on the run were nothing compared with the bike and the aero position was a fleeting option at best but everyone was in the same boat. The last run was just survival as the lungs were certainly feeling the first run out of the season. However, the substantial offerings at the food tent more than compensated, all in all a great event.

Tramore Duathlon

With the rescheduling of the Athy duathlon I ended up with 2 races just 5 days apart, not ideal. Last year the course was covered in sea foam with the sea battering the finish line and transition areas, this year was a much calmer affair. Last year I was chatting at the start line when suddenly all those in front of us sprinted away, I distracted myself from the first few kms wondering how I hadn't heard the start. Same thing happened this year and I was not distracted chatting so a word to the wise beware of the softly spoken starter!

It was a 5km run to start with the same plan of not going all out. This was particularly difficult when you see people you feel you should be with or ahead of huffing and puffing wildly. I am slow to admit that some small level of self-restraint and discipline pays off in the long run!! The bike is short at about 16km so all shackles were off and it was smash the pedal from the start for this section. With such a short route it was easy get caught in groups or with cyclists sitting too far out on the right. My experience here is to not be afraid to shout but to perhaps do so politely! The last section includes roundabouts so difficult to pass anyone over the last 1-2km so go hard from the start for the bike.



Felt surprisingly good (that's a relative term in this context!) on the second run with the sea front in sight. I was wary of the 500m or so loop around the block to the finish line, only to discover they had changed it to cut that section out and bring straight to the chequered flag. What would normally be met with relief was this time a feeling that I should have pushed harder.....oh and perhaps read the race briefing!!

