

Race Report: Nov 3rd 2010

The Roundabout, Cabarita

(200m swim 2.2km run 200m swim, 2.2km run 200m swim.)

Well at least after down falls on the previous 2 nights, at least it didn't rain. But after such a beautiful sunny day – boy was it cold when the sun went down and the wind picked up. Where has spring gone! Surely, we must be due for some balmy rather than wild, wet windy Wednesdays soon.

For the first time this season we moved back to the picturesque Cabarita swimming pool – the original home of the Concord Cannibals and one of Sydney best kept secrets (well in terms of nice pools anyway). The venue was welcomed by all, especially newcomers with comments like “wow it's so pretty and quiet over here and the pool is sooo less salty”.

Despite the coolish temperatures, more than 45 turned up (with 37 of those racing). Some like Dave and Hally content to just look on after having raced half ironman on the previous weekend. This week, saw 2 newbies – Michael O'Dwyer and Matthew Pride. Welcome guys.

This week also saw the return of Stretch (Jonathan Fowler) for his first race of the season after his European cycling holiday – following the Danube. We also welcomed back Chris (Geeza) for his first gentle hit of the season after injury. And Steve for his first and probably only race this season on account of having to undergo surgery (on Friday), to try and once again relieve some ongoing knee issues.

Not so many people snuck in a warm up tonight. There was more time spent on setting up their gear correctly in the transition area which was a large patch of grass. No having to fighting over the dry concrete spots to put shoes down this week. There were lots of towels set out with the shoes ready to go straight out onto the run. Nice work all.

Group 1 was away in the swim with the reminder that in the big lane you have to swim in a circle.... staying to the left. Luckily some head on collisions were avoided – but only just. Most impressive was Rick's way of getting out of the pool - no stairs so he opted for a full seal roll onto the pool deck. Nice. I wish I had a mackerel to toss his way. Once out and with a slow walk to transition they were off onto the run. Unfortunately Letiza got distracted on the run and became slightly lost on course - she did find her way back to the pool which was lucky. Letiza's nickname will now be Dora the explorer. Rick was first back to the pool, followed by Emma then Jeremy. Once again we saw Rick's seal-roll out of the pool but this time with seal claps. Anne forgot she was in a race the second time round during transition and had to be reminded less chatting, more racing. Rick was first back in and will now be moved to group 2 next week. (He was actually moved up, but carefully managed to avoid Steve the Handicapper pre-race who had already elevated him up a group).

Jeremy & Emma pulled out some impressive times to take 2nd and 3rd. Followed by John G and the combined girl-power of Gaye and Rosemary. Nice effort from Matt on his first race, in the middle of the pack. The girls (Christine, Anne and Lala) pushed home in front of Jonathon who finished strongly (a tough race for the 1st time this season – and I bet wishing he hadn't that many cafe laite's whilst in Europe over the last several weeks).

Group 2 - the eager beavers were all waiting and ready to go as soon as Group 1 entered the water. Jason and Kelly moved up to group 2 this week. This group just gets stronger and stronger each week and there is some fierce competition happening in the pool and on the run. With Paul just swimming / not racing due to a calf injury and Jim delayed on route, podium positions were up for grabs.

Daniel, Alistair and Andrew W all finished close proximity to one another and all seem candidates for elevation as the season progresses. Fiona and Kelly were trying to pip each other with Fiona D just finishing ahead of Kelly in the swim. Jason had to retire as his legs decided they were sore - but thankfully he came down to help me with the timing. Henry, Fiona and David H came home well in just over the 40-minute mark, with Curtis, Gerhardt, Lyn and Andrew B close behind.

Group 3 and the battle of the swim was on. Michele being the lone female was going to show these boys how it's done and finished just in front of James and Steve who were racing the last 25m next to each other - boys you have to kick harder to beat Michele – she is slick in the drink! Vlad had an enthusiastic cheer squad with his son joining him on the walk to transition - let's hope we see him in junior triathlons soon. Steve took off like a bolt of lightning and was the 3rd person back home - pretty impressive when starting in group 3.. Jame's, annoyed that he didn't pip Michele on the 1st swim thought he would get a head-start on the second one by performing an illegal dive entry. James finally managed to edge in front of Michele by getting into the water before her on the last swim. Geeza (my feet hurt) was extra careful during the walk to transition in his high tech croc thongs (yes guys, crocs have reinvented the thong). Mick, new to the sport had a very impressive race finishing 5th in group 3 - I say expect big things from him in the future.

Steve finished first home in under 35 minutes (excellent time), closely followed by Andrew B and Greg who had a great tussle the whole way, with only 10 seconds separating them at the finish. There is fierce competition at the top this year with 3 different overall winners in the last 3 weeks. Alan continues to be a strong performer, in 4th place, just in front of James and Michele (who bolted in overall female honours). Just over 90 seconds split Jose, Cameron, Vlad and Chris S, with Gentlemen Jim home in 40 minutes neat.

A couple of additional special mentions this week

- First and foremost Fiona Cowen who has improved immeasurably over the past female home. Running probably a minute a k quicker, she finished 2nd female overall
- Ditto for Gaye, who now is finishing in the top half of Group 1 – once we 'get rid of your brother in law (i.e. elevate him to Group 2), a podium is in the offing
- Daniel for taking out Group 2
- Gerhardt, for managing not taking anyone out with a right cross, during the first swing leg! Probably best to stick to the left big guy!

- Andrew Burnell who has come from nowhere to really push the old pro's in Group 3
- Michael O'Dwyer for excellent first up performance
- Lyn the quiet achiever who goes about her races with a minimum of fuss and in a relaxed (sometimes talkative) manner), but still managed to be the 3rd overall female home
- The 'Browne Boys', who also race with a smile on their face and who are both making rapid improvement

A big thank you to Brett who rode the course today to make sure everyone was going the right way. We did hear that may have been a few "short-course-champions" in Group 2 who came back up to Cabarita Road a street or two early, but they were directed more precisely on the second run leg.

I hope that for the first-timers to Cabarita that this was a good experience – it's a great pool tucked away by the bay with one of the best views in Sydney. Also, for some, a little more discretion on the run, away from the crowds that typically use the Drummoyne bay pathway.

Thankyou to David, Hally, Moira, Frank, Paul, Carmen and Jason with transition area, cheer squad and uniform orders.

Sarah / Steve / Brett