

# Nadine Voice, Ironman 2009

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First up here are my goal times heading into race:

Swim 1 hour 20, Bike 6 hours 30, Run 5 hours – total time of 13 hours allowing about 10mins for transitions!

## Pre-race

Alarm was set for 4.30am but I didn't need it as I had been awake for awhile, it's fair to say I was pretty excited that race day was here! Up and ate breakfast which was challenging, even though it was food I eat everyday it didn't taste or feel good going in but it stayed in and that's what counts! Geoff and his brother dropped us off at the race start just after 5am as we wanted to allow plenty of time to check bikes and get numbered. You should have seen Geoff's jaw hit the ground when he 1300 stunning race bikes all lined up! Geoff and Pete came through to watch me get numbered and take some pics, I'm looking rather nervous there! Then off to check my bike, walking in there was awesome and the first tears of the day happened there as reality kicked in again! Off down to the swim start to get wetsuit on and into the water for a bit of a swim before the start. It was still quite dark at this stage, the pro's actually started swimming while it was still dark but by 7am it was fairly light for us. It was pretty daunting being in the water and looking up to see all the crowds lining the road and lake front! I placed myself somewhere mid-pack for the swim start, I treaded water to find my own quietish spot so I didn't start off bumping shoulders and colliding with someone else.

Swim – time 1:15:14 (741st place)

The cannon went off and I just relaxed into the swim, I wanted to take it fairly easy as it's a long day out there! I got into a nice comfortable rhythm and tried to stay on people's feet for a bit of a draft. I started to get a bit knocked around after a few hundred metres after having had a surprisingly smooth start, nothing too serious other than a bit of a foot to the goggle which made my goggles suction on a little bit more. The swim honestly seemed to take forever!! I started to get tired heading down the back straight so focused on thinking about keeping my stroke long and smooth to conserve energy and keep my pace up. Finally turned around the last buoy and headed to shore, I started kicking a bit harder here to get the blood flow moving in my legs before having to run up to T1. I was certain that my swim time was going to be about an hour 30 so was telling myself to just forget about it and get on with the rest of the day. Imagine my surprise when I run under the swim exit and see the clock saying 1.15!!!! Wow!! That meant I had 5mins up my sleeve for later in the day!

T1 – time 5:46

IMNZ has a huge run up to T1, they reckon it's about 450m and a fair amount of it is uphill! The run took over 3mins! It's a bit like running a gauntlet, there are huge crowds of people on other side as you run through and they are all screaming and cheering, I actually found this part really overwhelming and almost started crying which then made me start to hyperventilate a bit. I was quite pleased to get to the top and to the relative quiet of T1. I shot through line of bags grabbing mine on the way through, I stopped just inside the tent and started to strip my wetsuit off, Aynsley saw me and came running over to help. She tipped my gear out and started sorting all that for me. Shoes on, vest on, food in pockets and after giving Aynsley a quick hug to say thanks I was gone. I grabbed a Powerbar on the way out to eat on the way to my bike. Paula and Tanya were cheering from across T1 which was cool. On with the helmet, bike in hand and I was off onto the bike leg.

Cycle – time 6:37:54 (909th place)

The roads were still really wet after the rain from the previous night so I was being cautious heading out through town on the cycle leg. My legs were feeling really good which was great, I stuck to the plan though which was to just spin up the hills, the first of which is very early on in the race. Heaps of people passed me going up here, surprisingly some folk who I thought would have already been way up the road. Not to worry tho, I had my race

plan and I knew I would pay for it later if I didn't stick to it. I got settled into eating and drinking fairly quickly, I was feeling hungry after that long swim and wanted to keep on top of my nutrition. I wasn't drinking as much as I should to start with as I needed to pee, now I have tried to pee on my bike and I haven't been able to do it so I stopped at an aid station about 30kms in to use the loo. Of course both loos were in use when I stopped but I used that time to adjust my Bento box and rearrange the food in my pockets as they were bugging me. Back onto the bike feeling much comfier and able to drink at a better rate which was good. Through the turn around at Reporoa at about the 45km mark, Geoff and co were there cheering me on and taking photos so that was cool. I hadn't expected to see them there so that was a nice bonus to see familiar faces! Back into town, by this stage it had started to rain, luckily it wasn't cold but it was bucketing down at times! At this stage I decided to use my aero bars less than I would have liked to. I had managed to crash off my bike using my aero bars in the rain prior to Xmas and had my first DNF, I was wary of this happening again and decided that although not using them would make me slower, I would rather be a few minutes slower and be able to finish the race. So I used them when it was dry and not when it was wet. By the time we headed back into town I was starting to feel a little bit flat after having been out on quiet country roads for such a long time, coming into town was fantastic, its all downhill and I was fair flying! I heard Mike Reilly call out my name as I came hooning past the finish area. Saw the girls cheering me on and then went through the main part of the course where there were huge crowds shouting out which was great and give me a good lift heading back out for the second lap. The best parts were hearing the voices that you recognised although you couldn't really see them in the huge crowds. Back up that wee hill which was a little tougher this time round but I just kept spinning away. Special needs was at the top here so they were calling through your number as you came up so your bag would be ready. I decided I didn't need mine, I knew what was in it and although I was after something sweet by then as I mainly fuelled on my cheese/marmite toasted sammies for the first lap (I was worried they would get soggy in my Bento box with the rain) but knew I had Powerbars for the sweetness factor so I would be fine which I was. Second lap was more of the same really, a bit more rain and I slowed down a little as I was getting tired, was still tracking ok tho so was happy with where I was at. Bottle pick-ups etc went ok, I stopped for the first one as it was really wet and I didn't want to slip but all the rest went fine and I got what I needed everytime. Those support station folk just rocked! They were so good! Coming back through town knowing that I just had to do the run was an awesome feeling, I couldn't stop smiling even tho I hurt a bit by then! Managed to remember to get off my shoes on the bike so I didn't have to do the cycle cleat hobble to transition.

T2 – 5:23

I love that these guys take your bike from you so you can just head off, they call your number as you come in on the bike so that someone has your bag held out ready and waiting for you. I grabbed that and shot into the tent and sat down on the chair! A lovely lady came over and started sorting out my stuff as I took off my helmet and vest. Compression socks on, shoes on, cap on, sunnies back on my head and stuffed gels etc into my pockets. The lady spotted that I had panadol in my bag and asked if I wanted it now which I did as my back was quite sore from the ride. She went and grabbed me a cup of water so I could down those, then I headed off to the loo before heading off onto the run. Paula and Tanya were right by the exit from T2 and gave me a big cheer as I headed off on my way.

Run – 5:01:24 (861st place)

My plan was always to walk/run the run as my running still has room for improvement. I didn't have any set ratio for the run/walk, plan was to just keeping moving forward as quickly as I could! If there was one part of the day that I didn't enjoy much it was this very first part of the run, the streets were packed with people, Cam Brown had just finished and Terrenzo was heading towards the finish so it was all pretty hyper out there. The cool part was hearing Terrenzo called over the line as he completed his very first Ironman!! It was overwhelming running through all those people calling out your name (it was on our race number) and they are being really nice and encouraging you along and all I could think was I'm in agony, I just got off my bike and I have to run a marathon and I have no idea how long thats going to take! It was at this point I put my sunnies back on and decided they would be staying there even if it got dark! I was nearly crying and figured life would be easier if people couldn't

see my eyes! I was very pleased to get around the corner and find that it was nice and quiet and I could have some me time!! That was good as it gave me a chance to get my head together and focus on blocking out the distractions. It was good heading out along the lake front towards the airport, I started seeing people I knew heading in to finish their first lap and then later some finishing their second lap! That was cool and it was nice to encourage and be encouraged along by other athletes, it was more meaningful than being cheered along by the crowd. Geoff and his family kept driving up and down the course so I saw a lot of them which meant I had to keep running so I didn't have walking photos!! I would run past them and then walk tho so not sure if it helped my run too much!! They were great tho, they had a huge day and sent heaps of text updates to the girls who couldn't be there along with keeping Richard informed of my progress. The run course was fun once you headed out of town, Rainbow Drive was probably my favourite part, there seemed to be something different going on there every time I went past and you go past 4 times. I got told off on my first lap, apparently Rainbow Drive is a non-walking zone so that was pretty funny and I promised to run it on my way back! There were heaps of folk out partying around that area, stereos blaring, BBQ's going (they smelt great!), funniest part was on the way back for the last time and some of the lads had started rating us, not sure whether to be happy or concerned that I got rated a 10/10 after slogging it out for over 12 hours, I was pretty sweaty and disgusting by then!! It made me laugh tho!! I was checking my times every 3km for the first lap and I was averaging around 20mins every 3km so figured if I could keep that up I would be fine. I lost track of kms tho around the half way mark, I was distracted by picking up special needs bag which I did use this time as I had some treats in there which I wanted as a reward by this stage. Also was heading back round the finish line so was very focused on the road in front of me and stopped looking for km markers. Round the back and picked up that last arm band which meant I was on the final lap!! That was a highlight, that meant the finish wasn't very far away. I had started to get quite jealous of the people I was seeing with 2 armbands on as it meant they were on the way home and now I had that coveted band as well!! I have to be honest and say I really really enjoyed the second lap, just knowing that I was going to make it seemed to spur me on and helped me keep the momentum going, also knowing exactly where the turn around was and the aid stations were made it easier for pacing yourself. I was starting to get pretty tired and sore but I just kept ticking out the kms!! Caught up with Di from Ontri on the way back into town, she was still on her first lap and was worried she wasn't going to make the cut-off. I chatted with her and did some quick maths and worked out that even if it took her half an hour to get back into town from where we were she would still have over 3 and a half hours for her second lap. I felt a bit bad leaving her when I ran off towards the finish but was stoked to see that she finished around 11.15pm!! Well before the cut-off time!! Nice work Di!! Saw Bec out on the run course as well, she was looking good considering how little run training she had got in due to her shin splints etc! Thought I saw Selina and shouted out a hi, realised after that it was a different Selina! Oops! It was awesome running into the finish, everyone was shouting out 'Go Kiwi', 'Go 536', 'You're nearly there', 'Well done', 'Awesome work' etc etc. I think I ran the last 5kms pretty much saying 'thank you' the whole way!! As I passed people heading towards the chute I was checking how many armbands people had on as I didn't want to do a sprint finish and race someone to the finish line, I just wanted to enjoy it, after all you only finish your first Ironman once!! I managed to get the finish chute to myself which was awesome!!

Wow what a buzz turning up that finish chute, there were a couple of marshalls there pointing the way and almost ushering you into the chute and they were so excited to see you which was amazing as they had already helped a lot of people finish! I gave them a huge thumbs up, lifted my sunnies back onto my head and headed up that chute, I could hear Mike Reilly saying 'we've got 3 in a row, 3 first-timers, lets bring them on in!!' I heard him call out my name and say 'Nadine Voice, you are an Ironman!!' That was amazing, its hard to describe how awesome that felt. I had a wee cry coming up the finish chute, its huge that culmination of all those hours of training and the sacrifices along the way all coming to end as you become an Ironman!!

Total time – 13:05:43

Am I upset I didn't come in under 13 hours? No.

Would I change anything if I did it all again tomorrow? No, I'm happy with the decisions I made out there on the course at the time.

Would I do it again? Hell yes!! In a heartbeat! I loved every minute of it!

I did get a bit of a hard time about the fact that I smiled all day, that was in my race plan tho! Richard always says to me keep smiling no matter what and it will make it easier, well it does make it easier and there were times when I was running and smiling and people were saying 'wow, you look really strong' what they couldn't see was the pain and the hurt cos I was smiling it away. The one time I forgot to smile was at the end, so in my finish photos I look shattered not smiley but thats ok, I have finish photos!! 😊