

Review

After my third place at Ironman Italy I was back home the next day and spent one week in the office. During this week S-TEC sports assembled my new custom paint Ceepo Shadow. Again, many thanks for this Henning!



Then it was time to pack again and start the loooooong journey to the other end of the world. I am always glad my Renault Kadjar offers a lot of space. It fits my bike, three suitcases, three backpacks, Mum & Dad & me. WOW!!!

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This time we chose a flight with an overnight stay in San Francisco and arrived the first time with day light. This allowed for a very easy arrival. The overnight stop reduced my lower back and hamstring issues I usually have after long flights. We had plenty of time left on the day to pick up the rental car, do some shopping and settle into our apartment. It was nice to enjoy the first Hawaiian sunset together.



The countdown – 10 days till race day



My first day in Kona always starts with an early bird ocean swim. I felt good and swam the whole course. I saw a lot of fish and even dolphins 😊 Following a nice breakfast in our apartment with ocean view, I showed my new Ceepo Shadow part of the bike course. Tough with ERGO insurance any bike damage on flights are covered, it is always a great relief testing my bike and seeing everything works. Training wise, the first days are always easy. The focus is to recover from the flight and adjust to the different time zone and climate. Then there are some days with intensity in the training to

sharpen up the body for race day. Under the watchful eye of my coach Ute Mückel these sessions went really well. And besides the training there is time to catch up with friends and enjoy the island.



Some impressions of the pool swim training:



Some impressions of the ocean swim training:



Some impressions of the bike training:



Some impressions of the run training:



The Ho'ala swim

One week before the race there is a swim event on the Ironman course, in which I participated. Last year I already had a great swim and could top it this year again. 56:58 minutes is a new PB for me on this course.



The countdown – race week is on

Race week on Hawaii is usually anything but boring. Some of my great partners come to Kona for Ironman Hawaii. It was very nice to meet the teams from Ceepo, Profile Design, Ceramic Speed, Kask and Koo again. We could catch up and did some videos and photo shoots together. Also it was great to see some their new products. The Kona 2019 edition of the PRO EVO from Kask, the Hilo sun glasses from Koo, Profile Design's new front hydration system and the 2020 Ceepo bikes. Also media appointments are a great way to inspire and get inspired! I enjoyed the days leading up to the race.

Having had the pro briefing on Thursday, I felt my tension rising. I was looking forward to race day and soon the big day was there!

some interviews



some interviews



Raceday

Swim

The swim start was as usual a bit hectic as everyone tries to find the best feet possible to have a good performance in the first discipline. It was a fair battle between us 45 girls and I found myself swimming with 2-3 other girls towards the boat, which indicates the turnaround point. Having passed the boat, I saw a swim group about 60-90 seconds in front of me. Damn it, I thought. This is the group I could have been in and want to be in. The water was a bit choppy and we had the current against us on the way back. I did not accept my position, but increased my arm turnover and tried to push even harder. I could see that I got closer and closer to the group. With 500 meters to go I was right in there and spotted some strong bike riders that I was happy to see swimming next to me. I was proud I kept pushing hard on the second half of the swim and was rewarded with this position. Great! We were 16 girls exiting the water at once. The swim once again showed that my overall performance improved and that my average pace is good enough to swim with the chase group in Kona. However, I still can't keep up with these girls on the first part of the swim. Tough I work hard on my swim speed; I am still not there. One point to discuss with my coaches Ute and Tim to work on in my offseason.



Bike



After a good transition I hopped on my bike in position 20 or 25 or so ready to catch up some girls on the bike. The first 10 km loop in Kailua-Kona is always a bit hectic. It is similar to the swim start. Everyone tries to find a good position in the chase group. Then you don't have to cycle alone over the 180 km bike leg. Being a strong bike rider, I found myself with 4 other strong cyclists on the highway. The pace and watts were quite high, but I felt good and I was happy about my race so far. I rode in 4th in this group when I saw a gap opening between the first and second girl. I pulled out to the left aiming to close the gap. However, when I was just behind the third girl, she pulled out as well and went for it. Then there was no gap anymore. There was a referee next to us and I asked him whether I could pull back again. He nodded. Then I went back and established the 12 meters distance again. Shortly after he came close to me and said: "I am very sorry, but I have to give you a time penalty." He was explaining more to me but I could barely hear him. I understood something about accelerating. As I could barely hear him, I think he did not understand my question I raised before neither. Well, I would have needed to go to the very front of the group to avoid getting this penalty. I have learnt my lesson the hard way. I entered the next penalty box and waited till the 5 minutes were over. I was sad. Starting again, I felt not like pushing the bike hard again. The group I was so happy to be in, was long gone. It was a severe setback but quitting the race was no option for me. At the



turnaround point in Hawi my front brake started rubbing on my disk brake. The wind was strong, but the sound was so loud, that I could easily hear it. Several times I braked hard on the decent and the sections with tailwind, hoping that the brake would loosen up. That however did not happen. Thus, I continued my journey listening to the sound of my brake in the wind. I could make up some places on the bike again. Usually I am in the top 10 off the bike, but this time I came off 22nd.

Run

I could have taken it easy on the run, not pushing but running in my comfort zone a marathon just to finish what I have started. However, I am not doing Ironman to participate, but to race. I had Ironman's slogan "Anything is possible" in mind. I kept saying to myself: "It is not over till it's over." The sun and heat were not as tough as it had been here before and there were no "explosions" on the run. I could only make up one more place and crossed the finish line in 9:30 hours as 21st professional. Not the result I came for, but the result I came home with. "Anything is possible!" maybe next time!

Anything



is



possible



Résumé



Looking back on the race today, I can truly say, that I am proud that I did not give up, but pushed till the end. It was not my best performance, but I have done what was possible for me that day. Crossing the finish line and seeing my family is always a big reward, regardless if I finish 1st or 21st.

Outlook

My tears have dried, the legs are still sore, the jet lag is in full swing and I hope the post Ironman blues is over soon. I am looking forward to my time at Playitas embracing their slogan "Free your mind" and preparing for Ironman Arizona coming up on November 24th.

Mahalo & Aloha,

Mareen

