



ALCATRAZ RACE REPORT – June 8, 2008 – 8:00AM PST Rode into transition to get set up at 5:00 AM. The buses were waiting and everyone was buzzing around. The weather was perfect and I knew it was going to be a nice day. The swim director told us it was going to be a good swim – whatever that means. I set my transition area up (thank God there were port-o-potties close by). Crazy Cat but on a new seat with the hooks built into the seat so my bike, for the first time ever, sat perfectly on the transition bar. I doubled checked all of my gear and walked over to the buses. On the way over I dropped off my swim exit transition bag to the volunteers. The swim exit transition bag is for whatever you need after you exit the swim since it is a 1KM run to your bike.

I put in my running shoes and a bottle of Gatorade. I was trying a new strategy this year – more on that at swim exit. I stepped into the bus for the 10 min ride down to the pier where the San Francisco Belle was docked. Everyone was talking and having a good time. Got off the bus and got body marked, in 5 places. I was not worried since I did this race last year, but to get marked in 5 places makes you a little worried. All of us then sat around the parking lot until the boat lowered the stairs for loading.

There were more port-o-potties, like 150 of them, thank God. I was carrying another bag with my wetsuit (2XU), goggles, neoprene cap, swim cap, 2 gels, 1 zone bar and a stick of body glide. Finally got on the boat at about 6:00 AM and sat in the same spot as last year. The boat leaves the dock at 7:00 so we all sat around and talked until then. At about 6:45 this guy sits down right in front of us. I took a double take just to make sure, yes I was right, it was Andy Potts, last years winner and Olympic hopeful.

He was real down to earth. He talked to all of us and just sat there like it was any other day, cracking jokes and asking about our tri experiences. He was the only pro, that I could see, that interacted with us age groupers. He wasn't nervous and very relaxed. A lot of people wished him luck during Escape and the BG Tri which decides the 3rd US mens triathlon spot. If he wins he's in. At about 7:30 I soaked my self in body glide and bummed some pam spray for my ankles and arms (it works – really good). I then put on all my gear. The next ½ hour flew by. Before I know it Potts waved and smiled to all of us and stepped to the edge with the rest of the pros and the horn went off. Those guys/gals are fast. One minute later another horn went off and I took the 10 foot plunge into the 56 deg. water and started swimming. About half way through someone knocked of my goggles and in the process gave me a black eye. The swim was fast and calm and I got to shore in about 34 min and change. I kept my swim cap on and just lifted my goggles onto my forehead. This way I have to free hands. I never knew having two free hands would help so much! I stripped off the top of my wetsuit and put on my shoes from the swim exit transition bag and then I stuffed in my goggles and swim caps. I grabbed my Gatorade and stated running – in my wetsuit this year. Everything was going good – I got into transition, took off the wetsuit (the Pam made it real easy), and took off on the bike.

The bike – brutal hills – fast decents – slower than last year. Maintained my composure and put it behind me and headed out onto the run.

8 challenging miles. My goal was to run 8:30 miles to set me up for a good race a Buffalo Springs 70.3. I ended up running about 8:20 miles and holding back for the last 2. The sand ladder was awesome and brutal at the same time. I finished in 2:55 and change, about 7 minutes better than last year. The race was great, the weather was perfect and the finish was like something out of a movie. If you ever have a chance to do ESCAPE FROM ALCTRAZ you should. I know that I will put my name into the hat every year! Hope you enjoyed the report.