

Beat: Sports

IRONMAN 70.3 NEW ORLEANS

ANDY POTTS AND LAUREN BARNETT IN TOP PRO

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USPA NEWS - Andy Potts had some surprise company at the end of the bike while Lauren Barnett won in her 70.3 debut at IRONMAN 70.3 New Orleans.

Our chat with our "inside-man" Anthony Di Mauro who takes us through the stages of this exciting event.

In her professional 70.3 debut, Lauren Barnett took the win in New Orleans after a close race that had eight women in contention starting the run. Haley Chura dominated the swim with a 24:12 split, but by the end of the bike there were a bunch of women including Chura, Barnett, Sarah Piampiono, Hallie Blunck and Laurel Wassner who were all in a position to run their way to the win. Wassner's race-best 1:25:53 wasn't enough to get her above fourth, though, as Barnett moved to the lead over Piampiono and cruised to a one-minute win. Blunck rounded out the podium. The top five women were all only three minutes apart.

Andy Potts, a former collegiate swim star and Olympic triathlete, is routinely the fastest swimmer in any race he enters and today was no different. Typically Potts continues to lead the way through the bike in his victories, but today he found himself in trailing by a few seconds into T2. Canadian Trevor Wurtele hammered through the bike to move to the lead after trailing by more than three minutes after the swim. Wurtele's bike split might have been too much, though, as he faded on the run. Potts regained the lead and won in 3:50:38, while Ben Hoffman also got passed Wurtele to take second. Wurtele hung on for third.

As promised in our precedent interviews Anthony Di Mauro gives us an athletes point of view after each race. Here is an extract of the New Orleans race. Breakfast? " Two waffles and 1 Ensure 2 hours prior to the race," said Di Mauro. I smile and think to myself " even I eat more than that before a morning run and I'm not even competing!" Anthony goes on explaining how he faces the stages. The swim-"Felt great, usual initial 4/5 min high tension thrashing in the water with hundreds of other athletes, then everything smoothed out. Swim actually felt shorter than the usual 1.2 miles, one of the Pro's actually confirmed this in our little chat after the race (34'40" swim time).

T1, run to transition was longer than expected but was ok, overall transition was smooth. I ask him how the bike section felt.

"I Pedaled at 75% of my Power threshold as I intended to save my legs for a faster than usual run, ride was smooth despite lots of people in organized groups were illegally drafting ,felt great even though the heat started ramping up about 82 degrees." (2h33' bike time).

Finally comes the run were Anthony looked really confident and it showed up to a certain point but unfortunately the heat battered our athlete and slowed down his pace. Di Mauro confirms, "I started hitting a higher pace in order to complete the leg under 1h45'. Despite the heavy head wind, I was on goal pace until mile 9.

The heat index was 90! I was melting under the sun beating at my head, everything started slowing down and so I had to throw my plans out the window and just try to keep it together (2h00' flat run time).

Surprisingly enough I crossed the finish line in 5h16'33", not bad for a heated and windy day! This was my personal best in a Half Iron distance, I might have to thank that shorter swim for this though."

"I would like to thank my Wife for her support in all of my training and racing endeavors, my team-mates Jennifer Hienton and Michael Canning who were also competing at this event, also a special thank you goes to MondoGoal(<http://www.mondogoal.com>) and Logikseo(<http://www.logikseo.com>) for their support!"

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