

Teresa's Excellent Adventures

It was a relatively busy year with 14 races in total (10 triathlons and 4 running races). I had three occasions where my bike was delayed to my destination but always appeared before my races (and only once where I was without a change clothes for 12 days). The racing involved 4 trips to Europe over a 5-month period so lots of aeroplane points!

The year began with the First Half Marathon in February. This a RUNVAN race and I am on the board (vice-chair) so I try to do all 4 of our races if possible.

April was a busy month with moving from my regional law firm where I spent my whole career to a national firm. I also did the 10km sun run.

May began my triathlon season with a trip to Spain where I raced the World Long Distance (3km swim, 120km bike and 21 km run) in Ibiza on May 7. It was very wavy and went around an island but the water was blue and nice. There was 1500m of climbing on the bike through the Spanish countryside. The run was mostly along the scenic waterfront but had three climbs on cobblestones through a castle. On May 28, I did the Ironman 70.3 Victoria where I qualified for the Ironman 70.3 world championships in Finland in August (see below).

On June 3, I did a sprint triathlon where I qualified for worlds in the sprint distance in Malaga, Spain next year. On June 24, I was in Ontario for the Welland Long Distance Triathlon where I qualified for Worlds in the Long Distance next year in Townsville, Australia.

On July 14 and 16, I raced the sprint and mixed team relay, respectively in Hamburg, Germany (with a trip to Poland at the beginning). The interesting part about the swim was that we had to swim under a tunnel which took us under the roads. On the mixed team relay, I dove in (usually no diving for triathletes), my goggles filled with water but given it was only 300m, I decided to swim with them like that. When I got out of the water, my eyes were burning - apparently the lake water was not very clean. On July 23, I raced a standard distance in Toronto where I qualified for the standard distance also in Malaga (at the same time as the sprint which I had already qualified for).

On August 26, 2023, I raced the Ironman 70.3 World Championship in Lahti, Finland (having qualified in May in Victoria). We went to Croatia at the beginning of the trip and to Norway after.

On September 22 and 24, 2023, I raced the super sprint and standard worlds in Pontevedra, Spain (we went to the Canary Islands first).

In October, I did the 10km turkey trot and will finish with a 5km run at the Great Trek (both RUNVAN races) at the end of the month which concludes my racing for the year!

James Trip to the “Worlds”

After many years of competing in triathlons I felt that last year was the right time to try to qualify for the ‘worlds’, as we say. The qualifying event was at the Peach Classic Standard Distance Triathlon in Penticton. There was only one slot available per age group in the province. Finishing 6th overall in the event, I managed to get a qualifying spot. After much delay, it was announced that the worlds would be held in Pontevedra, Spain in Sept 2023. With a full year of training ahead, I relished the time I had to set incremental goals to improve my performance. Key to this was my swim ability. Last September, I was losing hope that I could ever improve as a swimmer. However, I needed to commit once and for all. I joined a masters swim downtown at the YWCA. Our coach was all about dissecting each stroke down to its basic movement. I added the Harry Jerome masters swims on Friday mornings and the Ron Andrews masters on Sunday mornings, with additional swims throughout the week. During the summer months I swam open water at Kits and Jericho beach on Tuesdays before work. The improved results did not come easy. What I learned was what swimmers often refer to as a ‘feel for the water’. The more you swim the more natural it feels to move through the water. My average swim workout pace dropped from around 1:50min/100m down to 1:35min/100m. The work paid off in Pontevedra. I knew I wasn’t going to be the best swimmer in my age group. However, I was brimming with confidence because of the work I put in. I came out of the water mid-pack in my age group (29th) with a strong swim of 26mins (1500m). The swim was bound by tidal currents and river currents which reduced everyone’s overall pace. This was a quality swim for me. Out of the water and on to the bike and run, I took back 15 places and finished 16th out of 72 in my age group. The masters swim groups continue to impress me not only for the quality of swimmers but everyone’s dedication to those early morning workouts.