

## **FROM KINSALE TO KONA**

As a troop of Cork triathletes trek to Barcelona for the Challenge iron man distance this coming weekend there is one Cork lady who will have fond memories of that race just 12 months ago where she won her agegroup and knocked an incredible 51 minutes off her previous IM time of 11.08 set in Western Australia December 08 in her first ever IM distance event. It was at Challenge Barcelona that Joyce Wolfe set herself the goal of qualifying for Hawaii IM world championships...it was not a decision she took lightly knowing the commitment and sacrifices she would have to make in pursuit of this goal but she did have 10hrs 17 minutes to talk herself out of it!

In the dull cold light of no endorphin rush when Joyce considered the task she had set herself, she realised the enormity of it, knocking another 30 minutes off an already lean time, that'd be just under 90 minutes improvement in a 22mth period, when most of us look for seconds! There were few around her who believed it could be done by a full time physiotherapist with her own private practice, (maybe her best skill is not biking or running but juggling!) but there were fewer who would **tell** her it could not be done as the determination and belief that Joyce brought to her training and preparation in pursuit of excellence is inspirational.

Joyce clocked up important training hours over the winter building a high aerobic base, showing early signs of improvement in January when she placed 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> in the Little Island 4mile and Dungarvan 10 mile road race respectively setting clear PB's in both. This improvement was down to hard work and consistent smart training with the assistance of her Coach Pete Freedman of 'Driven to Tri', that some CTC members had the pleasure of meeting at a training camp in Cork this April.

The Lance mantra she adopted...'it's all about the bike' led to some confusing incidents when I rang Joyce (and she answered) as she was at max HR on the turbo in the kitchen, baking cake for a family dinner that night, replying to emails all at the same time...again it's the circus art of juggling!

Joyce immersed herself in her training and enjoyed every session, she particularly pays thanks to training partners Mick Buckley, John Meade, Peter Meaney, Sean Finn, Katie Cooke, Amy Wolfe and of course Charlie Brown, the spotted menace (this canine must have an unrivalled V02 max and slow twitch muscle composition!) without whom her task would have been all the harder. When on reflection the thanks is all theirs as it's a gift to train with someone who exudes encouragement, enjoyment and positivity whilst training. Two rules to abide by in the Joyce school of training – you'll do what it says on the tin, you'll have a latte afterwards!

The rewards for all the hard work started to come at the start of the racing season and on the road to qualification Joyce competed in the Austrian Half Ironman, near the location of her chosen qualifier race, getting top podium in her agegroup...a clear sign qualification was possible. Following her performance at the Austrian IM qualifier a prolific figure in Irish Triathlon and a great race analyser, Peter Kern, commented that "it was the best Female Irish performance ever at IM distance". Joyce narrowly missed out on setting a new Irish record by 48 seconds but the win in her age group and 7<sup>th</sup> overall placing meant the higher goal was achieved and she was packing her hula skirt and carbon wheels (courtesy of THE Edge, Thanks Simon!) and was off to Hawaii!

It was up and up following qualification and the 2010 sporting accolades continued to pile up with an unbeaten domestic record and taking 1<sup>st</sup> place in her age group in all international races

- Win at Bay Half Marathon and Cheetah 4 mile road race
- Win at Waterford Duathlon
- Win at Schull national series sprint
- Age group 30-34 long distance world champion
- Irish Olympic distance champion
- Female champion and 'Finder' of The Lost Sheep ½ iron distance in Kenmare

Now, as 1800 competitors of the world's toughest line up on the sands of Kona beach Joyce can be proud that she is the first Cork lady to qualify and has done so in the most admirable of ways. What will happen on the course, some say is luck...I'd say there is no luck at all in it when you have prepared in such a full and focused way. All on leaside will be gunning for you and be glued to IM live till the wee hours, but none more than her parents Peter and Angela and husband Mick who are travelling to Kona to wave the Irish flag and see another great performance in action.

**Congratulations and Good Luck!!**

Joyce and her most trusted training partner



Joyce taking the Female title in the Lost Sheep

