

Dominic Siwik- Hudson, WI

I have a very brief triathlon history. It all started at the Perch Lake swim of '06. I just wanted to do the 1 mile swim but they talked me into the 2 mile event at the registration table. I was told it was a low key event and that the previous year they had somebody do it in a couple of hours. I walked down to the beach in my Corona surfing shorts and flip flops and quickly realized I was the only one not wearing a skin tight suit. Oh boy! I never swam open water before so I had no idea. As a matter of fact, I just learned to swim a couple of months earlier. Why is everybody swimming before the official start? Weird. I don't need to warm up before hand.

The race was ready to start and we were all in the water. Everybody else was soaked but I was dry from the waste up. "That is going to be a big advantage for me.

Race starts, face in the water, foot to face, WEEDS, panic, and hyperventilation. I probably made it one hundred yards before reason kicked in and I decided I would rather live than be the headline "Man with Three Children Drowns" on the front page of the Star Observer. I have never quit before but today was the day.

I slunk back to the beach and as I got a little closer the man setting up the finishing chute calls out, "Good strategy, let em get ahead of you." Unfortunately it was no strategy at all but totally self preservation. There I was, getting out of the water with about fifty people looking at me. Longest walk of my life. Seemed like my towel was miles away. I hung around for a while and acted interested in the race even though I wanted to run away.

I finally decided to leave and was making good progress off the beach when somebody yells across the beach, "You forgot your free T-shirt. What is your size?" The slow walk back in front of the same fifty people I was trying to avoid.

That t-shirt has been nailed to my office wall for two years. I'm going to wear that shirt down to the IM swim start in September.

It's not coming back.