

## Caitlin Bridgland – November 2011 Report

Well the start of November was not what I had hoped for.... I travelled over to NSW with my coach Andrew Ivey and fellow Elite Sportz athlete Tom Bakwoski for the Port Macquarie Ironman 70.3. I started the race but I didn't finish it.

I withdrew about 15km into the bike due to a mechanical issue. I have had many people ask what was wrong with my bike and the short answer is the bearing on my front wheel had worn or broken (im not too sure of the proper terminology) which caused the wobbly front wheel and then it eventually stopped turning over. The only way I could keep going was to get a new wheel. So it was an emotional wait on the side of the rode for someone to come get me.

I was very disappointed that I didn't finish, as I am not someone who gives up easily but I managed to take a few positives out of that race. I clocked my fastest swim time of 25min and didn't get an injury. It was a preparation race for ironman to see where I was at with my training and to see what areas I needed to tweak. I came home with mixed emotions but I am determined to use my positives that I have gained to focus on my last few solid weeks of training before the Busselton Ironman.

It has been a couple of weeks since coming home from Port Macquarie and I am very happy with my training progress. I have been churning it up in the pool, long hard solo sessions on the bike and ticking over faster legs during my run sessions.

The mental preparation for Ironman is also an area I want and need to focus on. It gets quite lonely doing all my long rides and runs by myself but I know it's something I need to do for myself in order to prepare for race day. I have slowly starting creeping into my hollow to make sure I am resting and sleeping when I should and not going out and socializing as much (that will come post race!). It is easier being a single lady and training as I don't have to a partner that I need to spend time with and to also ruin the relationship by always training, eating and sleeping. But I must say it's also very hard as I have no one to complain, confide or cry to. It's always hard and difficult topic to discuss as most of you know – training and relationships but let's hope one day I can make them both work!!! As for now, it's a single Caitlin training and competing all the way!

I haven't raced an Ironman since Kona 2010 so that will be 14months come Busselton in December. I had made the decision to take a full 12months off from doing an Ironman as I had previously done 3 in 10months. I wanted to focus on short (well Half Ironman) racing to help increase my racing speed and also to prevent any serious injuries – so far so good! It was purely a personal and business decision as I am only 24yrs old and I want to be in this sport for many years to come, so even though I have found my niche in Ironman racing I still have plenty of time to compete in them. By having this break in Ironman it has also brought back the excitement that is Ironman and I can't wait for the Busselton on the 4<sup>th</sup> December!!!!

Caitlin Bridgland ☺