The morning started at 03:30 am for breakfast, dark and cool and a very light breeze, and WAY too early for normal people. Iron people are not normal people, obviously! First light at about 04:30am, by which time we were on our way to the bikes to make sure everything was in order. Such a buzz of excitement, trepidation, outright fear... And such a long line for the portaloos. Anxiety is a beautiful thing, it makes you go faster. Literally.

At the waterfront, more than 1500 age-group athletes are standing in the cool clear water waiting for the siren. The pros are already halfway along the 1.9km jetty by the time we start, Chris close to the front and me hanging back – the further back I am, the less people will swim over the top of me! It's a beautiful swim alongside the jetty, fish and seagrass to take your mind off the distance. Chris finished in 1:04, a bit disappointed not to go closer to the hour (I slapped him when he said that), and I managed 1:39, quite pleased as I was aiming for 1:45.

Up to T1 and out on the road. My computer tells me it was 50 degrees on the bike with a gale force headwind. Well, actually it was 38C, and a stiff breeze on the way out that became a great tailwind back into town, but it felt like 50C. The thing about Busselton is that the race is totally hill-free, but your bum comes off second best. 180km in the saddle, ouch. Plenty of Powerbars, plenty of Gatorade, and plenty of “why am I doing this/I’m never doing this again”, and before you know it you’re finishing your third lap.

The girls in the change tent gave a big cheer when I came in to T2, which brought tears to my exhausted eyes. Never ever forget to thank the volunteers! Off on the marathon run/jog/shuffle/walk/limp leg. My race strategy for the marathon consistent of “one foot in front of the other”, and being pleased to get a glow stick because it meant the sun had gone down and it was a lot cooler! Chris had slowed his pace right down because of a seriously sore back, and eventually I caught up with him so we walked the last 10km together.

Neither of us had planned to finish so late, but both of us had planned to finish. We got there by knowing our limits and sticking to them (especially in the hot and windy conditions), putting one foot in front of the other, keeping up with the nutrition, and the unwavering support of our family, friends and the amazing volunteers and locals of Busselton. Next race, I plan to win my age group.... 75 to 79! Might start training after Christmas....

Best wishes to all,
Kate and Chris Vince