

**Powerman Alabama  
U.S. Pro/Elite National Long Course Duathlon Championships  
Irondale, AL, USA  
8k run/53k bike/8k run  
April 9, 2006**

**Reported by Lauren Jensen**

The first multi-sport race of each season is always a good test of where I am at with my training. Powerman Alabama was no exception. This event consisted of a hilly 8K run, a hillier 53K bike, and another 8K run. The race was designated as the U.S. Pro/Elite National Long Course Duathlon championships, adding some excitement.

This winter had brought some extra bumps in the training road including injury and illness. I went into this race with a recently healed IT Band (that I did have taped for insurance), as well as a mild head cold that pretty much kept other competitors away from me (nobody wants to get someone else's snot on them). Since the cold was in my head and not my lungs, I figured I was fine to race. Plus I was antsy to see where I was at.

The 7:30am start featured cool weather in the 40s. This was very appealing to me after training through the cold Wisconsin Winter. I started out very conservatively since I knew it was a long, challenging course and I figured that patience would pay off. I was in ninth place a half-mile in, but worked my way into 7th by the end of the first run.

After a fast transition, I was on my bike. This year I am riding a Javelin frame again but have switched to the Torgiano; this was my fifth ride on the bike (another early season test). I felt great in the early miles of the bike and steadily started to regain some time on the field. By halfway through the bike I had moved into second place about 40 seconds behind super duathlete Andrea Ratkovic. I felt good until about mile 23 on the ride (about the 2-hour mark in the race), then I started to fade a little. Well, I had found the answer to my question of where my fitness was at. Deanna Frank repassed me at mile 25 and put some time back on me while I rode solidly in third position.

Despite my early pacing, the second run was painful. I told myself that everyone was hurting and tried my best to hold my running form together. I managed to do so until there was a little over a mile left in the race when my knee (IT band) started hurting. Then I did something that I rarely do in races -- I decided that I was safely in third, so I backed it off to a pace that minimized the knee pain. I love nothing more than racing wire to wire, but my body had other plans for me today. Sometimes you just have to listen to your body and preserve your health so you can race again



Above: **Team Sport Beans/NTTC** pros **Lauren Jensen** and **Kathryn Bertine** at the U.S. Pro/Elite Duathlon Long Course Nationals in Irondale, AL. Lauren placed 3<sup>rd</sup> and Kathryn crossed the line in 8<sup>th</sup> place.

another day. I learned a lot from this race - some position adjustments I want to make with my bike as well as ways I need to amend my training this year to improve my fitness.

After the race I was chosen for drug testing. This put me behind my time schedule for making my flight - creating the second race of the day. I had a 150-mile drive to Atlanta to catch my plane. Thanks to some help from Kathryn Bertine (fellow **Team Sports Beans/NTTC** teammate), I got my bike and other things quickly packed. It was an ulcer rush to the airport complete with road construction. I made the time cut-off for my plane with two minutes to spare. Whew!!! Thanks Kathryn for your help and congratulations to you on qualifying to represent the U.S. and our team at the Long Course Duathlon World Championships. Thanks to all of my sponsors!! And a special thanks goes to The Bike Shop in Glen Ellyn, IL for working so hard to get me fit on my bike in time for this race.