

A 50K BIKE RACE TO SAVOR

By Debbie Bozeman

On Saturday, May 8th, at Camp Lejeune, N.C., Steve and I completed an exciting 50K Bike race. I was first woman OVERALL with a time of 1:17:23, that's 24 miles per hour. Steve finished 3 seconds behind me. The winning time was 1:09 we almost got onto the first pack but we had started back too far, so we were in the second pack. There were about 200 racers, including 41 women. We were with a pack the whole time. The one time I went to the front it was like a swarm of bees all over me, the guys don't want a woman in front of them, they are so competitive. There were several accidents, one in our group. A guy brushed another guys wheel and went down and when he did we all had to scatter to avoid the fallout. I went "OH SHIT" as I'm running off the road through grass and rocks, but I did managed to keep my bike under control and get back on the road, Steve kept saying "come on we've got to stay with the pack". About that time we are pulling a slight hill and I'm trying to stand up with my legs still shaking from all the excitement of "riding off road".

This one girl was determined to drop me. She kept getting in front of the pack and pulling. When she did pull she would stay until the pace started to slow and the guys would move around her. She thought she could wear me down. I just bided my time and held on until the last 1/4 mile. She had made her move about a mile from the finish and couldn't hold it. That's when some of the guys made a break and I went with them and she couldn't keep up. I won by 6 seconds. It was **Sooooo** exciting!!!

Afterwards Steve said something to her about what a good job she did of pulling the pack along. She responded with some crack about everybody should be pulling their own weight in a pack. We just walked away when we realized what a bad sport she was. It's like Steve and I were saying to each other, you don't see Lance Armstrong at the front of a pack pulling like that. His team does the work and he hangs in there and races "smarter not harder." If she had stayed behind the guys she would have beat me because it's so hard to break in the final stretch and I am usually not that aggressive. She tried to break away too soon and ruined her chances of winning as I stood up on my bike and went for it!!!

What a great bike race! In Victory the Champagne taste so much better that night.

In preparation for the four mile ocean swim at the Hawaii Double Ironman in October this year, we swam in the ocean a couple of times. The first time the water was real rough and the second time it was a little bit better. I hate open water swimming!! I am just going to have to keep practicing and really working hard on my swimming. But next is the Grandfather Marathon in July.