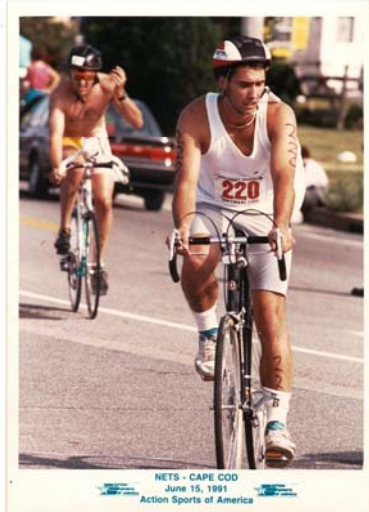


## How I became an Ironman-Peter Racicot



### **(First Triathlon notice the socks!)**

I would have to say my *Journey* began in 1990. (Journey- I always thought that word was silly every time I heard people say it relative to Ironman-people are starving, unemployed, etc., but truth is it is an athletic journey.) It was likely the summer after graduation from Northeastern. I was partying at a friend's house and we got talking about the Hyannis Sprint, we were drinking pretty good and a friend challenged me to do it. The bet was a case of beer, between me and Robbie Losciavo. We went to Hyannis had a great party and woke up hung over for the Sprint; I wore nothing but shorts, no goggles and no wetsuit. I remember thinking I would die in the water and remember Dick Hoyt and his son Rick blowing by me on the run. For the record I still kicked Robbie's ass, he got me the next year due to a flat.

Flash forward a few years, I started Riding the Pan Mass Challenge in 1994, had married my beautiful wife Linda in 1992, had Emily in 1993 and Caroline was on the way. I don't think I did another triathlon until two thousand and something, thanks to Athlinks, I think it was about 2005. I have ridden the Pan Mass every year since 1994 and likely will continue until I can't, it is something I am passionate about and am quite proud of. This biking likely built a bit of a bridge toward my taking the Iron Challenge.

## The PMC CREW in 2010



It is ironic to me, sometime during the nineties, I met Tracey Timmons through a mutual friend and always saw her at the Y, she new about my riding in the PMC. She used to say “I know you, someday your going to do an Ironman”, I always thought she was nuts and I would say no way! How cool is it that I got to see Tracy up at Placid when I did my first Ironman! Yes, I said first, I can’t wait to do it again.

(Tracy and I at Lake Placid the Day before the big event!)



After a few years of Sprints several Olympic Distance Triathlons and one Half Iron at Timber man in 2007, I decided to get a little more serious. I finally responded to one of Beth’s emails about Masters Swim (it would take me a while to finally respond to her Progressive invites). Footnote, I am pretty sure Jimmy Bunnell gave Beth my name. Thanks Jimmy!



Anyway, I joined Masters Swim sometime in 2009. It was a big step, I had seen them swimming and was totally intimidated and didn't think I belonged. About that same time I wanted to get serious and train for a challenging event so I asked Beth to coach me. My goal was to do the Patriot Half in 2010. I did great, I had gained huge confidence in my swim, became a better runner and stronger biker. Funny side story, there was another bet on this event as well, sorry Tom Lynch, I beat him also and took the case of beer.

Lessons learned at this event-NUTRITION and HYDRATION. After crushing the swim for me (I was inside of 34 mins, 43<sup>rd</sup> overall), breaking three hours on a 58 mile ride, I cramped up at mile six of the run and walked in. It was still my best half Iron to date and a great lesson for my memory bank and paid huge dividends as I headed toward an Ironman.

In 2006 I turned 40. I remember everyone would say "oh my god your turning 40 what are you going to do to celebrate". I decided to challenge myself and try to run the Boston Marathon. I failed to get to the start due to injury. I generally lacked an understanding on how to train. I had never really done any distance running and just figured I could run with people who had done the Marathon before. I tried again in 2007. I did finish but still hadn't learned how to run or train to run, I was injured, my longest training run had been 13 miles. My official time was 5:55! I had finished the Marathon but really had failed. (I think it is important to note, because five years later I learned to run and became an Ironman! With a marathon time of 4:45 at Lake Placid)

(From L to R-Stephen Meneely, Me, Ian Dargin and Kevin Dowd. Thanks for the support guys! Notice the second photo, last minute advice that I ignored!)



During the last ten years Kevin and Stephen constantly hounded me about doing an Ironman and I constantly said no way! Thanks for the persistence, especially Stephen; he set us up to travel to Lake Placid in 2010 and volunteer! They had finally gotten me interested enough to start thinking more about it. It was great having these guys up there when I finished!

I know most race reports are about the day, but for me it was as much how I found myself actually contemplating, signing up and doing the Ironman. Don't get me wrong the day was just unbelievable. I woke up at 4:00, had Oatmeal that had turned rock hard as I had had talked the waiter into letting me take it from the Buffet the day before-Neil how was yours?

(The most common question I got in the two weeks leading up to Lake Placid was "Are you ready"? My answer was always, as ready as I am going to be, I did the work! This photo kind of captures the mood for me in the final minutes before the gun. Fear, respect a state of ready-at least I hoped!)



Linda and I went down to transition, the buzz was about wetsuits. I obsessed about whether to wear it; I was most worried about my timing chip being exposed on the swim. I asked Beth and Mike, neither would give me an answer, only got the "if you want to qualify, you can't wear it". Like I was going to qualify! But I did want to measure myself against the best in the same conditions on the same track, so I chose not to wear the



wetsuit. It was truly seeing Chris Sherwood and Dana Spencer who weren't wearing it so it becomes a no brainer-I couldn't be the weak one.

Anyway, waiting for the gun was exciting, I was ready and focused looking forward to the day, nothing would distract me, not even the guy who I saw taking a dump in the water five feet away from me. Any other day and I would have killed him! I just moved away.

(My Fan Club at the Mirror Lake-My Mom, Kelly, Shannon, Ca, Em, Eileen, Jenna and Paige-Linda is behind the camera.)



All in all I found the swim easy. I started out trying to follow the line on the swim route. People made it seem like the line would make all the difference on the swim and make it seem easy, you need to remember that 2800 others are thinking the same way! My advice, don't bother. I moved way off to the right and found plenty of space to swim a comfortable 1:15. One thing I remember the most about the swim, was obsessing about my timing chip, if someone had handed me a stapler I probably would have stapled it to my leg! NO CHIP NO TIME was not an option. My biggest swim disappointment-I never swam over a diver!

The bike was really uneventful; I saw my family on each loop. I headed out of town from T1 with Renee Tuffy, we rode together for a while, but not long we ran our own races, it is a long day. Saw several other Pegasus Teammates on the ride, Chris Sherwood, Dana Spencer and of course Neil Withington-boy can she ride, even if I wanted too try, I couldn't stay with her on the bike! One thing I remember the most about the ride was just accepting that I was not going to finish in six hours and letting people go. Riding at my pace and as comfortable as possible-I do hope to make improvements on my ride. I also have to say that the bike was the only time I said what was I thinking "Ironman" this sucks! My Biggest bike disappointment-I still haven't peed on the bike and I peed a lot thanks to Beth's fuel plan!

T2 was something I will always remember. This guy, a total stranger was willing to rub sun block on me, tie my shoes, fix my hat, glasses you name it. I ran out of T2 pretty emotional. I think it was a combination of being drained and just excited to finally be fulfilling my goal of completing Lake Placid.

I remember heading out of town on the run feeling like I was on cloud nine-I got through the bike, no flats! The run was a grind at times, but was equally a thrill. On the run you really live for coming into Town to absorb the energy. It is where my family was and of course Beth and Mike Lamie. Knowing I was going to see these guys was a huge lift out on the run.

Beth and Mike-you guys are awesome! I learned a lot in the two years and your passion for the sport and genuine excitement for me at Lake Placid is not lost on me. THANKS!



I would be totally remiss if I didn't thank Linda Emily, Caroline and My Mom for putting up with my extra grouchiness during my Ironman training and being there to cheer me on and support me! Thanks, the day would not have been complete without you and your friends!

I also never would have gotten through all the long runs without my wife Linda, she ran every long weekend run with me and honestly helped me get them in. She forced me to do every mile and I am sure that without her I would have cheated my miles at some point!

By the way, I finished in 13:03:19, not bad for someone who started out just wanting to finish and claim Ironman for my resume!



