

his transition spot, still in possession of the lead he had claimed in the first strokes of the swim. After watching his pursuers come through one by one for a while, we found a nice park bench situated 100 yards from the finish line and sat down to await the arrival of the race winner, who turned out to be Matt Reed. I kept my seat long enough to see Jodie Swallow take the women's race, then made my way over to the second transition area, warmed up and waited for Liz Titan. And waited. And waited. And waited.

Finally, as the race clock was ticking on towards three hours, I spotted her bright yellow cycling top. I jogged alongside her as she dismounted and wheeled her bike to her spot on the transition rack, and we transferred her timing chip from her left ankle to mine.

"I'm sorry I made you wait so long," she said with a tone of deep embarrassment.

"Don't be silly," I said. "You did great."

All I remember of the next 36 minutes is wheezing my way up some of the steepest hills I have encountered in any race, having what remained of my breath taken away by the spectacular ocean views that greeted me atop each hill and seeing scores of Bermudians lining the streets and cheering enthusiastically for my fellow sufferers and me. I finally heard Steve Titan, husband of my teammate Liz, shout my name as I sprinted to the finish with tunnel vision and not a thought in my head except recording the fastest run-split possible.

Minutes later, to my great mortification, I discovered that Steve, Liz and Melanie had gathered together ahead of the finish line in hopes of crossing it with me, a lovely gesture that I would never have anticipated, being the time-and-placing geek I am.

Yes, events like the Escape to Bermuda Triathlon attract a special sort of athlete, and I'm not that special. ▲



England's Jodie Swallow outpaced a strong women's field to win the 2008 Escape to Bermuda Triathlon.

FOGGLE=VISION

"I may not know what lies at the end of the road, but just for today I have a clear vision of where I want to go! It feels good to look ahead. How about you?"

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