

RUNNER'S PROFILE

by Joe Howell

"I thought I had a great race today but my nemesis, Vic Birtalan, passed me late in the race and I couldn't keep up with him". . . . "Vic Birtalan is in my age group? No way, absolutely no way. . . it's just not fair". . . . "How was my race today? Actually, my time was not great but I beat Vic . . . I am one happy guy!" Who could be saying all of these things about Vic Birtalan? The above quotes, in no particular order, belong to John Brennand, Jack Bianchi and yours truly. All of us have enjoyed racing Vic. All of us love to remember (and for some is a real test of our memory) a "big win" over Vic, and alas, all of us now look in amazement at Vic, who is in top racing shape.

Vic can be described as a model, multi-faceted athlete. He has long been a good runner, and is now running stronger than ever. His similar abilities, and similar improvement as both a swimmer and biker, have produced some impressive triathlon performances for Vic.

Vic is now "tanned, rested (actually, not much) and ready" for his next challenge. He just turned in his best ever performance at Half-Ironman distance at the Buffalo Springs Triathlon in Texas, and he has his sights on other 1998 Ironman qualifiers as well as the Santa Barbara County Triathlon in late August. If there is anyone who has not only the talent and discipline, but also truly deserves to qualify for Ironman Hawaii, it is Vic. Of course, there is another benefit from Vic's qualifying and then undoubtedly turning in a phenomenal performance at Hawaii, whether it is this year or in the future. I can hear myself now, "yeah, I heard about Vic's killer performance in Hawaii; in fact, I remember a few years ago when Vic was in my age group and I beat him for third place." (Of course, I undoubtedly will forget to mention that a Tri-Fed official, who I swear I do not know and did not pay) disqualified Vic that year, launching me ahead of Vic into third place).

Watch for Vic; he is fit, fast and ready to compete!

30-34

1. Jill Zachary, 6700
2. Melissa Marsted, 4000
3. Melany Miners, 2500
4. Mariann Thomas, 1700
5. Julie Broughton, 1600
6. Marisa Garcia, 0

35-39

1. Liz North, 5500
2. Gae McClenathen, 4000
3. Jill Strauser, 4000
4. Kristen Battles, 2900
5. Darla Maciel, 1900
6. Karen Longshore, 1600
7. Susan Petronio, 800

40-44

1. Deborah Flores, 3000
2. Mary Ross, 2800
3. Cherie Topper, 900

45-49

1. Sharon Smith, 3700
2. Elaine Triplett, 3000
3. B. J. Robertson, 2300
4. Ginger Reynolds, 1800
5. Jan Campbell, 1600
6. Bobbi Janowiak, 1000
7. Fadumo Wignot, 900
8. Christine Green, 0

50-54

1. Stephanie Welch, 7000
2. Marilyn Hansen, 4600
3. Tara Brown, 1800
4. Judy Kewley, 1000

55-59

1. Shirley Saunders, 3000

60-64

1. Julie Lopp, 0

65-69

1. RoseMarie Disandro, 3000

Basic Information

Name: VIC BIRTALAN

Age: 55

Employment/Family: Computer Scientist - Computer Sciences Corporation, Goleta. Single parent of Sara, Scott and Keith—ages 23, 19 and 17 respectively. (2 college, 1 high school)

Other Sports/Interests: Triathlon, duathlon, surfing, masters swimming, weight training, ocean swimming, travel. Instructor at UCSB Extension.

Running Highlights

Favorite Distance & PR at same: 10 mile and ½ marathon; 1:01:38 and 1:23:25 respectively.

Best Race and Why: 1998 Buffalo Springs Triathlon—since I had the best time at the ½ Ironman distance to date and because I was able to handle the high temperature.

Worst Race and Why: 1992 Santa Barbara Triathlon. I was DQ'd for going outside of a cone on the bike course and because Joe Howell beat me.

Average Weekly Mileage (last 12 months): 30 miles, including races.

Favorite Local Race: Santa Barbara Triathlon. The distances are compatible with my training and I like the course.

Goals (Realistic) for 1998: Qualify for 1998 Ironman. Do the S.B. Triathlon in 3:20 and make my fourth swim in from Alcatraz.

Goals (Wildly Optimistic) before Year 2000: Qualify for the 1999 Ironman, do a sub-18 minute 5K (PR is 18:23), go under 1 hour at 1999 Chardonnay run, do a 1:21 ½ marathon in 1999.

Additional Information

Why I Run: Stress reduction and to promote clear thinking and problem solving. Swimming and biking don't produce the same introspective results for me.

My Runner Hero & Why: Two local runners: John Brennand and Jack Bianchi. John due to his consistency and speed and Jack due to his positive attitude given his tenacious recovery from cancer.

Personal Training Tips: Cross training, I feel, is the key to consistent, long term running. This, complemented with weight training, to avoid injury by being strong.

I like competitors who thank the race volunteers for doing that job. Without volunteers, most races would not occur.

Suggestions for local races: Have raffles for free race entries for local races.

Suggestions for SBAA: Establish an association with a running club in another state—possibly sponsor a visiting athletes program for local races.

My views on time. Be cognizant of your own morality and avoid wasting precious time on negative aspects of life, such as anger and selfishness.

Quote: "Break on through to the other side."

Jim Morrison

SBAA Member since 1990

