

This time you are fortunate to read my Race Report in English since the race was in the US and I would like to promote this beautiful race at Catalina arranged by @otillorace to attract even more Americans to the awesome sport called Swimrun.

I have to say that I think a lot of my vibe and my way of explaining things might be slightly more straight forward in English and not the usual confetti read....but you can just add your favorite curse words once in a while and it will help you catch the essence of my report! I'm also a bit constrained writing in English but hey, I will give it a try. With this said, grab a @nocco, lots of popcorn and a loooong break because this will be a freakin long Race Report.

As usual, we worked the entire Saturday during the "Experience" and "Sprint Race", which was so much fun! We explained Swimrun and our ARK brand to so many curious people. I am so thankful to be working with something I love and am passionate about – imagine going to these places and race whilst working!!! Even though I'm quite new to the sport of Swimrun I love exchanging ideas and experiences with the other participants - They are curious and as we've seen in Sweden this sport is growing slowly but surely capturing the American hearts as it has to ours.

After the Race Brief, which added some extra spice evolving questions like the availability of sunscreen along the course and if Mats could guarantee if there were going to rain during the race..... a bit more interesting than usual. We arrived at the hotel around 8pm on Saturday evening after a fun and hectic day at our pop-up store in Two Harbours. We ate a pizza in a hurry and then we had to prepare our gear and discuss our goals for the race.

As we haven't practiced together during the winter we needed to discuss what we realistically could aim for in the race. We don't like the pressure last season has put on us, we have never aimed for the podium and we still don't think that it is the most important thing. Our main goal is to have fun and do our outmost during the race. If that, in the end, leads to the podium that's just a bonus. I think both of us have struggled a bit with the external pressure and expectations on us as a team.

We tried to embrace the situation and tried to calm ourselves a bit, in the end, no one cares.

But would we be able to ignore the focus on the podium during the race? When we did Utö last year we had the same issues and had to stop and talk to each other during the race to be able to find the joyful feeling again. We hoped that we were more prepared this time.

During the days prior to the race, everyone was anxious about what the weather would be like on Sunday. What should we wear? I was quite confident to use ARK swimrun Ornö suit already before going to LA. The Vigg suit is sooooo comfy but a bit too cold for me in 13-14 degrees water considering the long sections and short runs at parts of the race. Both decided to use Ornö and to start the race with the re-attachable sleeves.

I had written the distances on my paddles. It's so important for me to know the distances we have in front of us. I also know from experience that I should really look at the map and try to remember every swim section and especially the exits. But I didn't. We were both tired, Bella felt sick and had to go to bed. I took a warm bath. I tried to relax a bit. We forgot to take the traditional pre-race team photo in the sunset or the one with all the gear neatly organized on the bed or the floor. We were too tired for that.

Finally, it was time to go and eat breakfast, we had already packed all gear so we just went down to the ferry and met up with all the other teams going to Two Harbours to enjoy the adventure. The first thing we did entering Two Harbours was selling some t-shirts and fixing pull buoys.... But then we left Christofer and Dennis to gear up!

I still had a hard time grasping that we would do this awesome race.....

I stacked up with A LOT of gels from @umarasports in the Kangaroo top and one bottle with water which made me feel like a hippo. But that's the way it goes if we plan not to stop at the energy stations. Our game plan is always to start slow and then increase as we get further in the race. As we were going into this race this tactic was truer than ever. We also knew that we had a bigger advantage in the swim sections which gradually increased in distance further into the race..... We do want to finish totally exhausted feeling that we have given it our all if we can achieve this goal than we are happy irrespective of our position.

The race started. You were not allowed to have the stretch-cord during the first run section so we had to communicate with each other to make sure we maintained a maximum 10m distance. I was stoked by the beautiful view from the top of the hill while looking down. Even though our plan was to start easy and then increase the tempo as the race progressed I must admit I got a bit stressed when we ended up in the back of the field after finishing the extreeeeeeeeemly steeeeeep hill. I know I'm telling you I do this because it's fun and that I want to have fun....but I also want to make sure that I do my best during the race. That is a parameter that drives me to push at all times. Even in the beginning. But as we discussed we knew that we would be strong at the end of the race

where the swimming sections were longer.....but still...this situation became a mental struggle for me. And I couldn't enjoy the race in the same way I usually do.....

After the first 3,7km run section we finally saw the first swim entry, we were warm by now! The first swim was 1500m and it went really well!! I tried to enjoy the magnificent water as much as possible! Amazing to be swimming in the ocean instead of in an indoor pool!!!! Lots of kelp to avoid and also a lot of teams not to swim into. As we reached the exit of the swim we ended up with about four women's teams nearby, this is an unusual situation for us. Usually, we are alone on the course during the race and can settle a bit, relax and just keep our pace. But now we became a bit stressed or... disturbed....I just wanted the other teams to either go super fast and disappear or super slow and disappear out of sight. Unfortunately, I'm not a magician so neither happened for a long time. 4,8k on broad gravel roads, a bit uphill and some downhill....not really enjoying the race yet. But my body felt strong and full of energy at this stage. Dennis cheered us on!! Great to have friends around the course!

Then we had a 400m swim before starting the 10k in the mountains...We noticed this American women's team swimming like queens!!!! Soooo impressed!!!!!! We had noooo chance in Hell to keep up with them. Soooo impressed!!!!!! We ran next to @nanna.bergendahl and @lillbrittney talking to Nanna and Johanna gave us some energy. Other teams we passed didn't give us any response as we tried to cheer them on and get some cheer back. Then we started the hiking up, up, up, and up....and up....then this terrible curvy gravel roads that never ended and just kept going straight ahead or turned and then just continued around the corner. A never-ending story. Have you noticed that the gravel roads are not my favorite, by now? We did "cab down" (pull the upper part of the suit down) the wetsuit and removed the sleeves to avoid get overheated when running in the hills, but I actually froze a bit on top of the hills as it was quite windy.

We had awesome teamwork going, I pulled a bit then Bella and we continued to switch as soon as the other one felt stronger the whole way up to the top. I felt strong! As usual, we took energy every 30 min but we also brought our own water up the hills. Prior to all swim sections, I had some extra energy to make sure to stay warm. As we all know, after uphill there is downhill....but we didn't now that the downhill was THAT steep. Like 95 degrees (not really but you get the point!). I didn't see some part of the road because it was leaning inwards....crazy steep. I laughed when I saw this...Are we really doing this?? Should we just lie down and tumble our way down?!?! On the contrary, we danced all the way down to the end of the downhill. I felt my big thighs

trying to do their best to keep up with the force of my body running these steep downhill without falling! I thank my thighs. They were awesome. I will never complain ever again that they are too big or fluffy. They fu\*kin nailed it in these hills and I'm very thankful for that. We held a good pace downhill. Even though I've almost only enjoyed different Zwift challenges in my garage this winter and only had 5 longer runs since ÖtillÖ Swimrun World Championships in September, they managed to do the job. Awesome thighs!!!!!!!!!!!! Bella and I kept a good pace and are always strong downhill and I think we did this part really good.

Finally, we reached the third swim which was 700m.....and I have never felt afraid to enter the water but this time I was. It might be the last bumpy swim in Malta which was actually a bit frightening.....at least in hindsight. I saw the waves. They didn't really scream "WELCOMEEEEEE!!!" to me..... I didn't tell Bella how I felt. I know she trusts me and I can't let her down. I did take some extra minutes to observe the current and where the waves would carry us and entered a bit to the left to have some extra margins....and then I just entered the damn scary ocean telling myself that I could do this. I am a strong swimmer but I didn't believe a word of that. I was scared as hell, but it wasn't that bad. The only scary thing was in the end when we were flushed up onto the beach as dead fish and reeeeeally close to a big-ass-rock! Phew. And then we laughed!!! This was the second time – and last time- we laughed during the whole race. I remember this because I noticed I enjoyed laughing. It gave me energy. We started to run, I told Bella my legs were a bit sore after the downhill dance section and she ran in front of me. We held a good pace. Don't really remember too much of this 1,9km run. But I do remember that we didn't see a single Bison. We met @finercrossbredthug and @miarohman and they cheered us on, very thankful for that! I was tired and was really looking forward to the swim section of 1300m.

The water was calm. And I really enjoyed a relaxing swim. We passed a lot of teams. I focused on @simcoachen 's voice inside my head – Big!!! And long Helen! The whole stroke! I also had a vision of big strong arms taking this monstrous strokes as one with the water.... I pretended that was me. No one could stop me. I had a really good flow and I felt Bella at my feet which makes me feel stronger and that we are a team – we are warriors fighting together. I had some struggle to see where to swim but I found the exit around the corner. I was cursing my laziness, that I didn't have a look at the map the night before. Studying the map would have saved some energy and time. Finally, we saw the flag and reached the exit and it felt like we were in the middle of nowhere.

2,2k running on gravel roads again. Do I need to explain I didn't enjoy them? We kept a good pace and knew that we didn't have that much of the race left. I was looking forward to the long swim coming up. A bit concerned that I would become cold as I felt a bit cold after the last swim. As a solution, I tried to run a bit faster. But I was struggling now. During this run section, I could feel the gravel roads started to take its toll on the body. However, I still felt I had some more energy and we were able to maintain a good pace.

As we entered the 1600m swim and I became really anxious not to find the exit, as I didn't see any flag or buoy, but suddenly I saw a buoy. I stopped many times during the swim and discussed with Bella even though I know she had less of a clue than me, but I just wanted to make sure that we were heading in the right direction. At this point, I didn't see any other team.....and starting to....feel a bit ..alone...and small...I was looking down...it was sooooo dark.....and I started to visualize great whites in the big darkness below me and B. My heart was pounding. I was thinking, this is now goodbye. My kids were at least going to be able to tell an exotic story about how they lost their crazy mom. I felt like a seal and was sure that a big shark was heading towards us and would probably enjoy a big tasty bite from our bodies marinated in @umarasports gel. I had to take a deep breath. Focus. They could f\*\*k off. I closed my eyes every stroke as I didn't want to see the darkness. I tried to convince myself that the chance of a shark taking a bite of us was very small. I tried to focus and see any flag or something to navigate to. Suddenly a small rib kept us company and I felt safe. And stronger. And more like a She-Hulk and less like a seal again. And boom I saw the flag!!!! I started to increase my frequency. Closing into shore the colorful and friendly fish welcomed us. The 1600m felt more like 2000m and it was nice to run again, even though my legs were starting to feel a bit.....strange. 3,6k running until next swim and we just kept on going, one foot in front of the other one. Bella took the lead. We ran next to the @swimrunmonks and saw @teamsimpoyer in front of us. That gave us some energy! To reach the entry of the 800m swim section you had to go down a very steep stairway. This sucked. I felt like an old lady trying to go as fast as I could down those stairs. Tired as hell we started the 800m swim, and I noticed that the @swimrunmunks held the same pace as we did so I took the chance to rest and swam soooooo close to their feet as I could. Coming up from the 800m with a little bit more energy we started the 4,9k run...the last run of the race actually....and with that in our mind, we knew we had to dig deep to go as fast as we could. We saw Dennis and I screamed to him to take me off the course!!!! Since I had enough of this sh\*t.....But of course, this was a joke! I would never EVER quit a race still alive.

Bella focused. Super strong. I told Bella I was totally fu\*ked by now. Bella pulled hard! I asked her to slow down going downhill since my legs had had enough of that....my muscles were totally exhausted. The exactly same gravel roads we already had a run on at the beginning of the race we now had to face again.....It was a struggle both mentally and physically....

We held the same pace as the @swimrunmunks a couple of k's....they had endured me and Bella mooing like cows in synchronization. They told us after the race that they thought we were about to give up at that point. However, what they didn't know was that this is how we sound when performing at our best – unleashing 100% of the She-Hulk we have inside us!!! This is how we roll, suuurprise fellas!!!! ;) Then we saw the swim entry!!!! HEEEELLLLL YEAH!!!! And we started to gear up for the last swim....and then....we saw that it was an additional loop.....and this was soooooooooooooooooooooo hard mentally but Bella didn't say a word. I had to boost myself. Every step. Bella continued to pull hard in the front. Helena and Johan passed us and Johan shouted to us "You will nail the last swim!!!" This made me ignore the fact that I was mindfu\*ked from the additional loop and just focused on the last swim coming up instead....I followed Bella. She fought hard. I shouted positive words to her as much as I could, but I knew we had about 1k to the last swim. Suddenly Bella shouted to me – "Do you see them?" I thought she saw a women's team behind us and I couldn't care less at that moment. I struggled hard and if someone wanted to pass us then I was happy to let them, but I couldn't see them. She told me that she saw a women's team in front of us.....I told her that I would never be able to swim faster than them – given what I saw they were capable of at the beginning of the race! Bella told me that she just wanted us to do our best in the running part and try to take as many meters as possible during the run. We ran faster.

We arrived at the swimming section, Johan and Helena and the other women's team were about 500m in front of us. I decided to give it a try. It was a long swim and my arms weren't tired at all, come to think about it I felt pretty strong, which actually might give us a chance..... I saw that Helena and Johan took a better way forward than the women's team and decided to navigate towards them as long as possible. I had a good feeling and we came closer and closer to Johan and Helena. The women's team was a bit further away, but I think we went faster?! Did we really? They must be tired!! This gave me energy!!! We past Helena and Johan and I could almost hear them cheering us on in our ambition to catch and overtake the other women's team. That gave me a super-duper boost. I tried to visualize every stroke like a big monstrous arm catching as much water to push back, the whole way back.....I noticed we were closing in on the women's team... And I saw they had to stop a couple of times to navigate. Every time

they did we caught up further. Finally, we were at their heels.....The devil on my shoulder was asking me – Do we really care? They will go faster when they notice us passing them.....Do we have the strength to respond to that? And – worst of all - should the race end up with a 300m sprint finish in the soft sand?! Which would be a nightmare. My legs were almost numb. Why not just give them some slack and avoid this nightmare situation?!

But then I noticed Bella. She fought behind me. She was eager!! And...what the hell was I thinking?!! OF COURSE!!!! We had to give it a try at least. So we did. And I saw they tried to speed up things when we were coming up alongside but I had a feeling they were too tired to respond.....and we were able to pull away. I had no idea if they had the strength to keep up with Bellas's feet....But we gave it our all!!! Coming up to the shore I glanced back and I saw they were about 20m behind us. I screamed to Bella “RUN!!!!!!!!!!” And so we did. “They are really close, RUN!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” When we were about 50m from the finish line we saw that we would manage to cross the finish line without rushing. It was sooooo awful to run in the sand, my legs almost didn't manage to get me forward! It was a relief to pass the finish line and I love the fact that we managed to squeeze out all power we possibly had during the race!!!

The other team came about 15 seconds behind us. We hugged them. They hugged us. Of course, we understood that they were disappointed. But they handled it like Queens, like athletes respecting each other. This was a very beautiful moment.

Relieved that it finally was over and relieved that we actually did a good race! But. After the endorphins of crossing the finish line.... I have gone through the race.... and I didn't experience the happiness that we usually have! Not the confetti. Not the laughing and smiling..... Why was it like this? Due to a lot of different factors. One of them is probably that the course was really tough, but I'm afraid that one of the parameters also is that I can't handle the external pressure and expectations. I need to work on being able to enjoy the upcoming races.

Thank you, Bella, for a fantastic race as always- giving it everything you had!!!!!!!!!! I really enjoy racing with you and I'm so impressed with the progress you have made during this year I've known you!!!!!! I know you have put in a lot of work on your swimming this winter and that has really paid off!!! We did soooo good in the swimming sections!!!! LAAZZZZER!!!!!!!!!!

@arkswimrun FAKLE FAKLE!!!!!!!!!! What a week!!!!!! I enjoy laughing my working days with you guys! What a season we have in front of us!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Thanks for the world's best

Swimrun gear, world's fastest Swimrun suit, world's best cheering squad, world's best rental suite washer, and world's best colleagues!!!!

@addnature Thanks for cheering me on and for the never-ending supply of kick-ass sportswear!

Thanks to @simcoachen – For taking my swimming to the next level! We still have a long way to go and some puzzles to solve and I'm looking forward to every minute working on this together! Thanks also for being a good friend.

Thanks to @napridrott who helped during the winter with my foot injury – it sucked but you helped me staying positive and working on my recovery.

Thank you @umarasports gel for making us the best energy EVER. The best there is! And last but certainly not least -thanks to @otillorace for making this adventure a reality! I see all of your hard work and I'm so impressed for making everything run so smoothly!!! Thank you for showing us the beautiful island Catalina!!

Thanks to my family who support me and allows me to follow my dreams.