

VONSY®



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Newsletter

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European & Dutch champion Long Distance 2017 and WORLDRECORD: 15 (Fifteen!) times Sub 9 hours

Defended my title at Challenge Almere-Amsterdam

Winning a race is easy, well that's not really true, is it :-)!
But what is, is that winning a race after you won last year is very hard.
It seems I do well under pressure, as you look back on my career you see that I was able to defend many titles.

To just name a couple of races that I won several times and also in consecutive years, IM Cozumel, IM Florida, Challenge Roth, Challenge Wanaka, Challenge Walchsee, IM 70.3 Wiesbaden, IM 70.3 St. Pölten, IM 70.3 Kraichgau, IM Barcelona and now we are adding Challenge Almere to my huge pleasure.

Racing in your home country, as I have mentioned many times, is just special. It seems like you always have one gear more then in other races.



So I want to quickly take you true my day. Lately I've been swimming great in my HUUB sleeveless wetsuit, but as the water temperature had dropped to a chilly 18 degrees, Onko from www.triathlonwinkel.nl and HUUB, advised me to swim with my normal HUUB suit, so I did and was happy that I listened to his advise.

Our swim was weird, it was for sure a bit to long and way to slow according my planned time schedule. I knew we we're not doing very well as I was just swimming to relaxed and easy, but with a long distance race the day is long. I remembered myself of this and the slow pace didn't disturb me any longer, it was a bit of a shocker to see the time once I was on my bike, but well in 2nd position strait away, so just shut up and focus, it's not always about fast times is it :-)

Ever since IM Maastricht I was curious how my fellow Dutch Girl Els had biked almost 8 minutes faster



then me, so my plan was to swim with her, check that box, as I did, then ride with her for the first part to see how her biking skills are. I wasn't disappointed, she was riding very strong with the tailwind in the first 30 km. or so and soon overtook the leading girl.

Once we left the famous Dutch dykes and had a side and head wind, the situation changed slightly and I saw my change very early in the race to get away and get a small gap. I love this course of Challenge Almere- Amsterdam, my years and years and with that around 14.000 - 18.000 kilometers a year biking in this similar landscape pays of for me, I love dreaming away in the race and thinking back off all those crazy hard, long and in ridiculous weather circumstances bike rides, I did in the beginning of my career.

It always make's me proud, I've put in the work and the effort for so many years, I'm now just picking the fruits from those many years.

Sorry, you see drifting off again :-)

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Back to the race, coming off the bike, which I really want to mention, I enjoyed a lot, it was great to ride my speed, just go totally on feel and enjoy the cheers and jumps off all my family and best friends that were spread over the course. So leading out of T2 and full of joy, as one it's great to already be leading going out for your marathon, 2 it's such a fun and great run course that I was really looking forward to these 42, 2 km and 3 of course the same family and most importantly my best friend Joyce would be there for me all 3 hours long :-)

By the time I reached 32 km on the run I was really cold, my upper legs were more sore from the cold than from running!

On the bike I didn't have any problems, the wind was stronger than last year, but further the conditions were fine. One of the great things of this event is that when you get lucky, you have your Hotel and with that your hot bath, just 50 meters from the finish line. So as I'm already a huge bath fan, my thoughts were drifting off to that very same bath, but I first had to do those 6 laps and suffer through this cold. In an interview straight after you can even see how my lips are blue.



The finish was, as it always is in Almere, awesome, special, emotional and even more. I love hearing my best buddy Ruud de Haan's voice that brings me home and through the finish line. Ruud spoke at his 25th Almere race and decided this was his last Almere.

I've known him my whole career, we really go back a long time, he's such a close and great friend of mine! We shared many special moments, my first time on the Dutch radio, back in 2005 or so, where he accompanied me to the studio's after I became World Champion ITU Duathlon long course, is just one of them.

I hope for sure that this wasn't the last race where he waited for me at the Finish!

This race was kind of different for me and weirdly enough I lost track of my race time, I so embraced all the cheers and all the familiar faces, people that I know from my first years of racing in the Netherlands and new friends that this beautiful sport brought later. So yes this under 9 hours chaser, last track of time and just enjoyed and took it all in to finish at 9.00.03", some say it was even 9.00.01" :-)

But hey who cares, I got my favorite Dutch flag, won the race and with that my 16th long distance win, extended my lead in the World ranking from the Challenge Family and had a great and fun day.

THANK YOU CHALLENGE ALMERE AMSTERDAM!!!!

Hug from your **Vonsy**