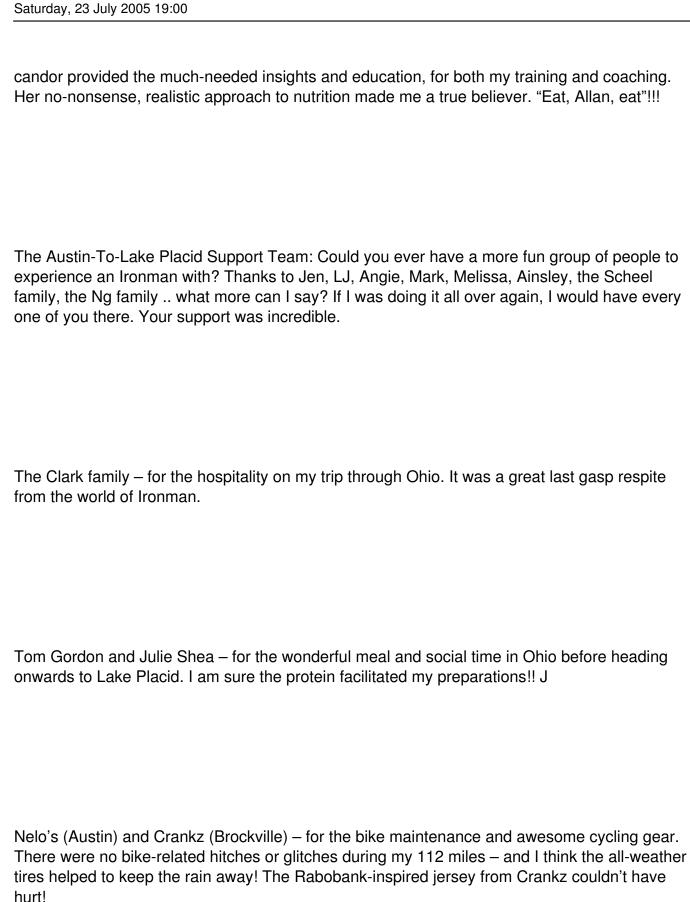
I have to send out many special thanks to the following people who helped make my Ironman experience both fulfilling and uplifting:

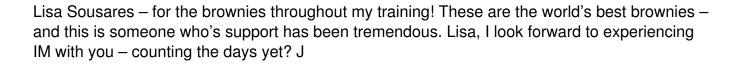
Kurt and Shelley Egli and Clark Bickley – for the now infamous dinner discussion at Freebirds last July. After bouncing some ideas around with them and airing the whole idea of my doing an Ironman when nobody else really had an inkling of it, I realized that there might truly be a reason in my heart for pursuing this goal. I was right. They were there for me. And the thought of Kurt's words about the maple leaf tattoo kept me focused on the goal J

Richard Ng (and family) – Frankly, I'd never really envisioned that our conversation on your patio three years ago would have lead to us doing this together – but I am thankful it occurred. You've been my best friend on the planet for 35 years. I can't think of anyone better to share "the day" with ... seeing you smiling on the course was great for me and seeing you at the finish (dang it, waiting for me!) was even better. Grasshopper, you grasped the pebble from Sensei's hand. We've been through a lot together – and you certainly know all of my personal history - sharing this is definitely on the highlight reel!!!

Jen Racine – I thank you for all your support, your presence on race day, and, frankly, your inspiration. When you started running for the first time (the infamous 400m run with you), it served as a motivator for me to return to the sport that I was told I'd never be able to enjoy. I thank you for reminding me of the true joy that that world offers. Your finish at IMF was truly inspirational and I am not sure I have experienced any better sports events – and I've been to many. You may have the faster IM, but I still own the 5K J



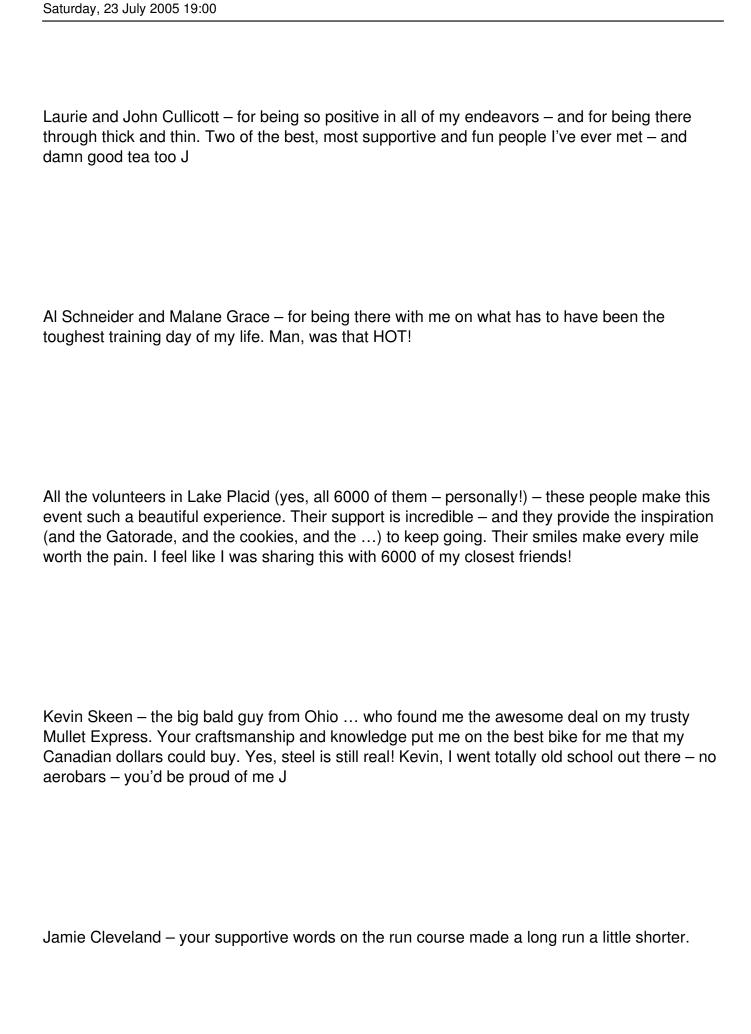


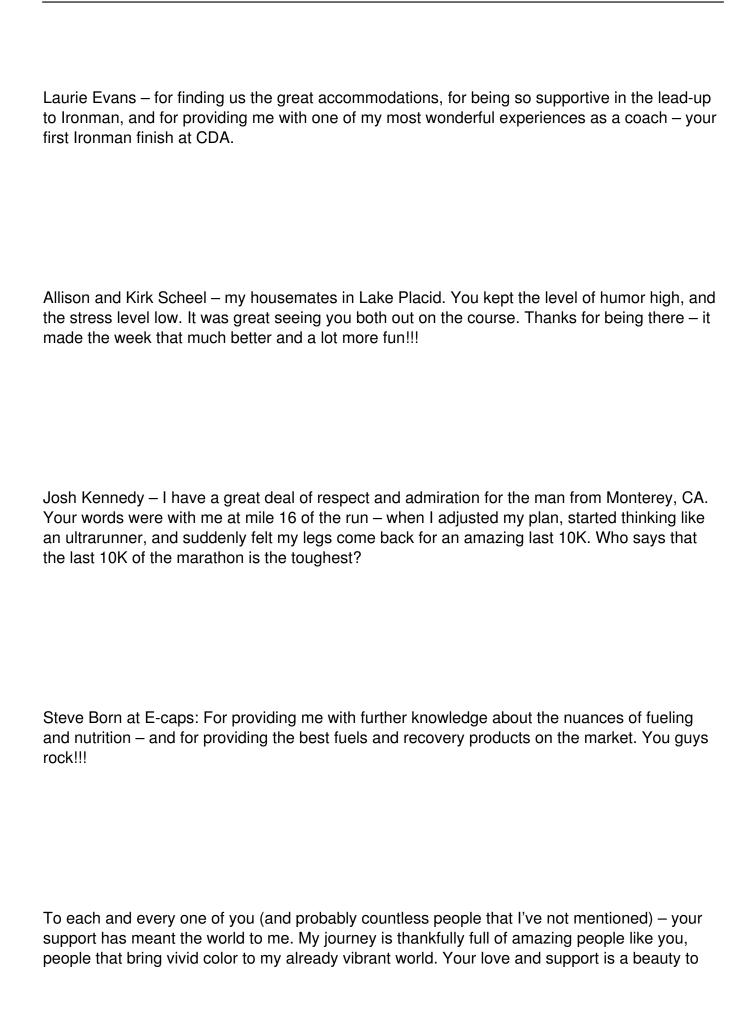


RunTex – the best running store in the universe! Paul Carozza was one of the first people I met when I moved to Austin. I distinctly remember the days back on 12th and Lamar – before the flood! Paul has always been very supportive of my endeavors, as has his fantastic staff. A special thanks goes out to Juan, Jeff, and Gundy – you guys are the best! Just remember, Brooks Adrenaline 9.5 …not 12 J

Laurie Hahn – Laurie, your race report from Lake Placid last year was something that, quite honestly, had me in tears. Your heartfelt sincerity touched me and served as a reminder to me in my quest for Ironman success. I know your vibes were there throughout the day ... and no, Wisconsin does not sound like a good idea J

All the athletes that I have ever coached and worked with as a physical therapist – being involved with an athletic population was always my dream. Over the past 17 years as a PT, I have lived the dream. Your dedication and motivation has always provided me with the inspiration to pursue any and all goals in life. After finishing Ironman, I truly believe that I have more enjoyment watching someone that I have coached complete their first Ironman – more so than doing it myself. Thanks for all the wonderful memories.





Afterword | Allan Besselink Saturday, 23 July 2005 19:00

behold. Peace be with you all.