

[...november 2007...]

man<sup>3</sup> news



Manchester Triathlon Club  
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man<sup>3</sup> news is the membership newsletter of the Manchester Triathlon Club.

The Manchester Triathlon Club is an affiliated Club with the British Triathlon Association and Cycling Time Trials (previously RTTC).

man<sup>3</sup> news is published by the Manchester Triathlon Club, 6 Warwick Road, Manchester M21 0AU.

Editor: Konrad Steinert

Manchester Triathlon Club Executives:

- Acting Chair: Jonathan Dabbs
- Vice Chair: Dan Nolan
- Treasurer: Jeff Sherrin
- Secretary: Kat Copsey
- Membership Secretary: Harry Davies
- Press Officer: Andy Quicke
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Notes for contributors:  
Contribute including stories, race reports, news item's, classifieds or event listing may be submitted either as Microsoft word document or excel document. Images are expected electronically in JPEG, TIF or GIF format.

Send contributions to:  
newsletter@man-tri-club.org.uk

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#### Chairman's corner - November 2007

Well, for most, the season is now over, so time to reflect on what has been a very successful season. The club has continued to grow, and membership now stands at over 425 (and still growing)! With this has come success for the club in the North West Series.

In the team prizes, MTC won both the Men's and the Ladies events. The Men won all three events at Chester, Boundary Breeze and Rivington, in doing so taking the team prize by 5 points. The Ladies event was much tighter with the ladies one point behind Chester going into the final event. The girls won this race with Chester in 2nd, and so were level on points, but they won on 'total time'. Congratulations to all involved.

In the North West individual series, the Men had 6 of the top 10 places, including overall winner Lee Szymanski – a superb effort considering Lee is only 19. Tony Jolly also finished in a very creditable 3rd place overall. The ladies had 4 of the top 10 finishers, with Vicki the highest MTC lady in 3rd place.

Paul Barrett arranged a great end of Season party, which was enjoyed by all, and then continued until 4am for the hard-core. Thanks to Paul for arranging all of this.

Looking forwards, the AGM is coming up on Monday December 3rd, 7pm at Longford Park. Please do your best to attend as the committee need to know your viewpoint if we are to continue to meet your needs. We are also having to make some tough decisions caused by the growth of the club, so is in everyone's interests to find out what these are so we can gauge opinions and make the right decisions. Light refreshments will be provided.

The events section of the forum is already buzzing with races for next year, personally I can't wait for the Pennine Bridleway

(<http://www.man-tri-club.org.uk/Forum/viewtopic.php?t=1798>) – a great relay fell race with fantastic scenery. If the weather is half as good as last year, then it will be another great day. Thanks to Sarah Lees for volunteering to organise this.

The coaching team has now added new training sessions, including the return of the winter turbo's and additional Saturday runs. And for something different, Steve Clayton is also taking mountain bikers out (including complete beginners). So, if any of this appeals, check out <http://www.man-tri-club.org.uk/Training/index.html>, which includes a link to the training calendar, and also the training forum available under <http://www.man-tri-club.org.uk/Forum/index.php>.

There's also still time to get involved in the cross-country races – again see the forum, by the time the newsletter is issued, 2 will have gone, but there are still 3 left to go.

You will have noticed that Konrad has taken over from Dean as the newsletter editor. Thanks to Konrad for that, I'm sure the high standards will be maintained! Thanks also to everyone who has so far stepped forwards to help the club out in many different roles throughout the year. Without you, it would not be possible to have the thriving club that we currently have. For those who have recently volunteered for a lot of the new roles, someone on the committee will be in contact with you soon (if we've not already done so) to ensure that you are fully up to speed with your role. Sorry about the delay in getting around to this, but there's been a lot to do recently.

Happy training!  
Jonathan



**Annual General Meeting Agenda**

As previously advertised, the AGM will be held on Monday 3rd December, 7pm at Longford Park (in the upstairs bar). The draft Agenda items are as follows:-

- 1) Chairmans report
- 2) Election / re-election of committee and non-exec roles on the committee
- 3) Treasurers report
- 4) 2008 Membership options, cost of membership and training vouchers
- 5) Payment options for 2008
- 6) Coaching programme for 2008
- 7) AOB

Don't forget, if you don't attend the AGM, we won't know your viewpoint, so we would encourage as many people as possible to turn up.

Light refreshments will be provided.

Regarding agenda item 2. Below are details of the committee and non-exec roles currently required to run MTC. The proposed committee and non-exec role composition is detailed below. If anyone is interested in any of the roles, or would like more information, please advise either the secretary ([secretary@man-tri-club.org.uk](mailto:secretary@man-tri-club.org.uk)) or the chairman ([chairman@man-tri-club.org.uk](mailto:chairman@man-tri-club.org.uk)), or speak to any of the committee on the night. Should two people both want to fulfil the same role, then a vote will decide the filling of the post.

Of all the roles, the three most crucial roles to be filled are the training voucher co-ordinator (update 13/11 Now filled by Martyn Cornish), the Secretary and the Membership secretary roles. Brief role descriptions for these are attached at the bottom.

Committee role	2007	2008	Proposed
Chairman	Jonathan Dabbs	Kat Copsey	
Vice-chairman	Dan Nolan	Dan Nolan	
Secretary	Kat Copsey	Vacant	
Treasurer	Jeff Sherrin	Jeff Sherrin	
Membership Secretary	Harry Davies	Vacant	
BB Director	Freesia Day	Ala Jackson	

Non-executive members – Non committee roles but are still essential to the running of the club

	2007	Proposed	2008
Training voucher co-ordinator	NA	Martyn Cornish	
Club Kit Co-ordinator	Kat Copsey	Gary Wolsencroft	
Social Secretary	Paul Barrett	Paul Barrett	
Membership administrator.	NA	Jaynie Phillips	
New member contact co-ordinator	Ala Jackson	Ala Jackson	
Health & Safety	NA	Dean Frost	
Welfare Officer	Nicole Joseph	Vacant	
Coaching Officer	Rob Harvey	Rob Harvey	
Press/PR	Andy Quicke	Andy Quicke	
Webmaster	Rob Harper	Rob Harper	
Newsletter	Dean Frost	Konrad Steinert	
BB Director's assistant	(1) NA	Vacant	

BB Director's assistant (2) NA Vacant  
 Junior Representative Nina McArthur Nina McArthur  
 Duathlon Co-ordinators Martin Webb Martin Webb/Andy Fardon  
 Commercial Liaisons Jeremy Bygrave Jeremy Bygrave  
 Membership Payment Tracking rep NA Caroline Slaughter  
 Training weekend organiser Hannah Lancashire Sarah Lees  
 NoEAA affiliations co-ordinator NA Verity Collett  
 Road-Relays Coordinator NA Verity Collett  
 Cross-Country Coordinator NA Paul Skipper  
 Trail / Fell Races coordinator NA Sarah Lees  
 National Team Relays co-ordinator Jo Harvey Jo Harvey  
 Club accounts auditor Alister Harris Alister Harris  
 Boundary Breeze accounts auditor NA Daniel McParland  
 Maintaining Club Records and Honours Board NA Vacant  
 Running the Club Awards Series NA Vacant

For new-members contacts please refer to the MTC forum.

NB Club coaches not included here as these are sourced through the head coach. Session collectors are also co-ordinated outside of the AGM, and so haven't been included here either.

Training voucher co-ordinator job description  
 This should be a fairly straight-forwards role that will involve two simple tasks  
 - Regularly checking Paypal for any purchased training vouchers  
 - Sending out training vouchers using printed labels  
 The person taking over this role will therefore need access to the internet. A label printer will be provided, as will all other stationery required by the voucher co-ordinator.

It is anticipated that this role may well need additional time at the start of January as this is when the majority of the vouchers will be purchased. For the remainder of the year, it is estimated that this role will only need 1-2 hours per week effort maximum.

Secretary Job description  
 -Deal promptly with all correspondence on the club's behalf.  
 -Answer any email membership queries raised by potential / new members, or forward to the appropriate member of the committee  
 -Maintain records of meetings correspondence etc. in an effective manner ensuring that members are aware of decisions made.  
 -Lead specific projects as required by the Club  
 -Ensure that all members are informed of events & decisions as necessary.  
 -Ensure that meeting agendas are prepared and distributed in partnership with the club committee  
 -Co-ordinate all preparations for the AGM ensuring that this is done in line with the club's constitution  
 -Take minutes of all Management Committee meetings and ensure they are communicated efficiently to all club members and coaches.

Membership secretary job description  
 Attend committee meetings to discuss membership issues, and supply updates from the Membership Administrator, the New Members Contact Co-ordinator and the Membership Payment Tracking rep.  
 Ensure the above three people are all working towards the same



goal in terms of membership and there is no overlap in roles  
Provide arbitration over membership disputes.  
Supply input into the decision making process for annual review of membership costs and membership options  
Ensure the latest membership information is on the website (via the webmaster)  
Handling email queries regarding membership

NB The membership secretary is not now responsible for maintaining the membership spreadsheet, issuing of membership cards, or chasing up non-payers – these are now the responsibility of the Membership Administrator and the Membership Payment Tracking rep respectively.

## Race reports...

### Rivington Tri, Sunday 9th September 2007

Report by Martin Webb

MTC Clinch Men's and Women's NW Series Team Awards  
This year's event saw a good turnout from the club as we looked to clinch the men's and women's team awards in the North West series. I use the term, we, liberally, as this is a report from very much the back of the race!

Personally this was my first Olympic distance event for three years so it was with a bit of trepidation that I arrived to find Rivington shrouded in mist half hoping that the swim might be cancelled, even though it's my best discipline comparatively speaking.

Tony Jolly was putting everyone to shame warming up on his turbo trainer followed by some sprints up and down the road.

To win the team prize the men needed to have four good finishers and the women needed three to finish.

Before we knew it we were in the water and off, a nice wide start and the water not too cool.

At the business end of the swim Lee Symanski, Richard Hyder and Chairman Dabbs had good swims to finish in the top 15.

Further back Viv Slack, starting near the back, started to claw her way through the field. Here's what Viv had to say about the swim:-

"The swim was a blur for me though don't get me wrong, not because of speed - a combination of water in my goggles, lots of bodies and an inability to swim in a straight line made it confusing. At one point I seemed to be in line with several people doing breast stroke - a sure sign things weren't going well. I was very relieved to get to dry land."

The bike leg turned out to be an good, challenging course, the same one used in the Horwich Triathlon, not much traffic and fairly scenic. The long climb into, through and out of Horwich got the heart rate going but was fairly manageable by spinning a low enough gear. It did however seem to be the course for punctures. Jon Dabbs takes up the story:-

"I knew I needed a 13th place or better to move up into 4th spot in the NW series. I was on track for this after coming out of the swim in 17th, and having moved up to 14th on the bike was going well until puncturing. Undeterred (and also thinking about the team prize still up for grabs for MTC which needed 4 club finishers), the wheel was changed and set off hell for leather to try to make up some places. After finishing the bike in 20th position set about the run, and gained 9 places to get the result I needed."

Meanwhile after a slow swim (for him) Tony Jolly was flying through the field on his bike closely followed by Viv who was showing no ill effects of her time trial performance the previous day. Konrad Steinert was also making up significant places after the swim.

I spent 12 minutes recovering from my puncture and in retrospect I would have been quicker running to the finish with my bike (it turned out I was less than a mile from finish!) unlike the girl from Ashurst Bike Club who actually had to run back from Chorley with her bike.

The run is a really lovely route - past the reservoir and through the forest. As an out and back course you see the leaders on the way back. Lee, Jon, Tony and Richard secured good places for the club and hence the NW Team Series.

Konrad made up an amazing 20 places on the run to clock the 7th fastest run time.

Viv had the fastest ladies bike leg and a solid run saw her finishing 4th lady.

Amy Hibbett, in her second Olympic race, had a solid bike leg and consolidated to make up a further 8 places on the run to be the 2nd team counter for the ladies.

Becky Roberts in her first Olympic race finished in style with a sprint finish to secure the ladies NW team title. All the counters get a trophy I believe.

This race clashed with Hellvelyn and the Vitruvian (previous day) where a number of club members were racing. It was good however to see a good turn out here with Pqartick Holtby and George Lipscombe also racing. A good, well organised race, post race massage and shower, plus bacon butties and unlimited supply of toast and teacakes.

It was a great effort by all especially the team counters especially by those who entered specifically so the team could win the NW Series - you know who you are!!!!



### Teggs Nose Duathlon, Thursday 16th August 2007

Report by Martin Webb

Given the potential conditions an impressive eleven hardy souls entered the final 'summer' duathlon supported by eight marshals and three sets of parents. At one point there were more marshals than competitors. Despite the recent weather we were treated to a dry evening with a bit of wind. All the marshals seemed very happy not to be racing!

A mass start saw runners negotiating a steep downhill section for 600 metres that was really too steep to let the legs go and giving everyone something to look forward to as they run back up this hill on the second run. This was followed by a long uphill drag back to the transition area. 'Storming' Andy Norman was pushed all the way by Alex Young with Jon Dabbs not too far behind in 3rd. Andy started the bike leg with a 23 second lead over Alex and rode away from the rest of the field on his borrowed titanium bike. Chairman Dabbs gave his new flying machine another outing and put it to good use by overtaking Alex on the fast downhill section, a lead he held into transition, and extended on the final run.

A special mention for Rob Harvey who had cycled out and finished 4th looking a little bit tired. Mark Benton and Richard Hyder battled it out for 5th and 6th place with only 20 secs (in favour of Mark) separating them at the finish.

The battle of the other two juniors in the race, Owen Mitchell and Nina McArthur, resulted in Owen taking both run legs and Nina the bike leg. There were two solid runs from Viv who also won the award for shipping her chain the most times during the race! It was also nice to see Sally & Cathy both finishing in more than respectable times. This event was run regularly from the early to mid-nineties and is fairly unique so the only real way to measure progress or compare performance is to actually do the race – we plan to run at least two of these next year, so hope to see you there! Looking back at the records the fastest time I can find previously is 43:58 so it won't come as a surprise to see that Andy has well and truly smashed this!

Thanks are due to Helen, Rob Harper, Michelle, Kat, Martyn, Skip and Guy for helping out with marshalling.

### Hamburg World Championships, 2nd September 2007

Report by Tim Johns and Harry Davies

Tim: This was my first World Champs experience & couldn't wait to get started on the Sunday morning at 10:20, after arriving in Hamburg on the previous Thursday. More than a 3 day build up!

I had checked the entry list at registration; in my wave there were over 130 athletes, dominated by Germans (25) & Brits (20) with a number of Americans, Ozzies, Mexicans and the odd representative from Russia, Philippines, Sweden and Ireland. My goal was to finish in the top half of the field & 10th Brit.

I arrived early to re-check my transition spot, no. 3145 & contemplated the 800m run through T1 from the end of the swim to the start of the bike. I jogged round the outside of the swim course staged within the Alster River – although within the centre of Hamburg it flows into a man made harbour. First off that morning, were the AWAD athletes (athletes with a disability) & to see them take on the swim/bike/run was both humbling & inspirational.

The 1500m swim was easier than most, we had to swim under a series of bridges, so it was easy to sight. A 'par' swim of 25mins was OK for me, then I ran through the town hall square & about 400m later found my bike. By the time I got to the start of the bike, I realised later that it had taken me over 4mins to negotiate T1 – not a course for fast times. The bike course was fast, a two lap affair & I tried to maintain my effort at exactly threshold rate (about 170bpm). I was tussling with a Spanish rider in the 50+ age group & a couple of Germans in my category. We had to bike up Hamburg's own 'mile of sin' the Reeperbahn twice but at 11am there wasn't much to see. What was more noticeable was the amount of drafting that was taking place. Large groups of riders were beginning to form both ahead & behind! – shouldn't be allowed. Rob & Skip experienced the same in their race.

I eased off just before T2 & tried to psyche myself up for the 600m long transition area. At the start of the 10K the two Germans were just ahead of me & I tried to stay with them, we passed several others, including 3 Brits early on. However, this was not the way to start a 10k run. My heart rate was already at 173 bpm; I usually start at about 163 bpm & then build to 168 & hang on.

By the mid way point I had been dropped by the Germans & worse, people I passed earlier started to overtake from with about 3K to go; not a good sign - I realised then that I had paced it wrong. My quads started to burn & with about a mile to go I saw Harry in the crowd, from then on it was a bit of a blur, but lots of cheering 'go on GB, go on, nearly there.' Over the last 400m, the crowds were packed along the side of the road. I've never done a big city Marathon but would imagine the atmosphere would be the same. By the time I reached the finish line I really had nothing left & was gutted at my poor finish.



I finished 70th out of 130, not bad, but lost about 8 places in the last 3k. I'm glad I've qualified for Vancouver in June '08, see if I can improve on the placing & pace the run better.

Harry: Quite an amazing experience for me, the first (and maybe the last!) in a GB shirt. I took the slow route, Hull to Rotterdam, and drove to Hamburg. The first view of the site was incredible – a sea of people, bikes, closed roads and trade stands. The organisation was the normal Teutonic high level of efficiency and smoothness. The few days pottering around were very pleasant – in fact, I saw more of Tim, Paul & John than I have ever done in the UK.

On the Saturday night, MFW, Margaret, suggested we go for a walk around the swim course, but there was an ulterior motive. My son and daughter had secretly flown out to watch me in the race. They thought the opportunity to see the old man in a GB shirt was too good to miss. Needless to say, I was delighted to have my family with me (unfortunately Elefante had a previous engagement).

As Tim has mentioned, the disabled athletes were amazing. I was nursing a very dodgy back and a chest infection, but there were disabled athletes hopping to the start, and others being assisted into the water in all ways. There were people with missing legs, arms, some with balance problems – all manner of disability – but they all coped with heart warming guts. I will never forget the diminutive Japanese-American girl with one leg who, during the swim, was slowly making her way back to the swim exit but was going so slowly and was totally submerged for such long periods that the safety canoe which was escorting her was clearly considering pulling her out. She managed to get to the exit and refused all offers of assistance to strap on her artificial leg, to make the very long trek to transition. After I had finished my race, I saw her 1 km from the finish, running, throwing forward her artificial leg, obviously exhausted, but she clearly intended to complete the race – and she did. It was incredible to see – and I will never complain about minor aches and pains again.

The race went reasonably well for me – but it was not a race for a PB.

The swim was straightforward and, as usual, I enjoyed the bike but as I have most problems on the run, my daughter walked back along the run course to greet me – and ran alongside me

for a few hundred metres (oops, isn't that illegal?!). Finishing the race was an unforgettable experience. There were crowds of people, shouting 'Come on, GB!' The GB team organiser had given out a list of the names and numbers of all the GB competitors. One woman, waving a Union Jack shouted, 'Come on,..... (pause to look up my number) Harry!' We were told that the GB team organiser would hand out Union Jacks just before the finish. Not being a flag waver, I didn't think I would be interested. However, on seeing all the Union Jacks being waved near the finish, I proudly collected my flag to cross the line. I heard my name over the tannoy and saw my time on the gantry. I finished under 3 hours, was 992nd out of 1100ish in the race, but more importantly, 65th out of 80 in my age group. As I didn't expect to even qualify for the race in the hills of Wakefield, I was delighted.

Having abstained from alcohol for a week, I broke my fast that evening.

The next day, we went to have a look round Lübeck and on our return, there was no sign of the triathlon – everything had been very efficiently cleared away. It was quite a surreal experience, walking round Hamburg centre, wondering if I had really done the race. The photos proved I had.

Other memories:

- the German athlete, near to the end, was in tears with the pain in his ankle and stopped next to me and completely broke down. A German couple had a few words with him (my German wouldn't have been able to cope) and after a few minutes, he carried on, limping very badly
- the athlete in my wave who only managed 100 metres of the swim before being pulled out. Seemed a long way to come for only 100m,
- getting my bike and hobbling to the transition bike exit, which seem to recede like a mirage
- the friendliness between the triathletes

Overall, quite an experience!

9 MTC members took part - from L-R: Skip, Vikki Wade, Harry, Tim Johns, Paul Schofield, Rob Bell, John Murray, Rob Harvey, Jacqui Slack.



**Ironman UK, Sunday 19th August 2007  
(the hawaii qualifier's version)**

Report by Chris Clarke

I'll make a start...

It all comes down to this.

Isn't it strange that when you enter for the IM that you immediately get motivated. That was sometime in April/May when I thought to myself that this year was fast becoming a non event and I was desperate to do something other than work 6 days a week. I asked the family what they thought, and I was met with - oh go on then, as you tend to be better to live with when you train anyway !!. Great, there you have it, not only does IM help you test yourself it helps you inter-act with the family on a happier level, nice one.

So, after parting with the money for IMUK I set about writing/constructing my program around work and various weddings/stags/hen weekends and the normal working week. (I'll mention the family too - never last and certainly not least!). After making rough notes I came to the conclusion this was going to be hard...

**Race Day.**

I'll mention the weather only once. It was windy, it had been raining so much that the field we were staying in resembled a mud bath (hopefully the farmer spent more money than he earned pulling people out). Then the temperature, very mixed. In fact it seemed very weird getting a lengthy brief on hypothermia instead of the normal hyponatremia/heat stress etc.

Anyway, the race.

The Swim It was due to start at 0600 hr's but this year it was delayed because many of the athletes could not get out/in of the car parks due to the above. Which meant a few of us were treading water for more minutes than we actually wanted too, never mind you're here. The race eventually started and immediately the lake seemed full (approx 1600). To which for the first time ever I felt I've needed a life jacket as the amount of pushing/grabbing that went on was the worst I've experienced. Then it happened the goggles got kicked/pulled off, nightmare!. Which led to the discovery of a new drill - goggles in the mouth and swim to the side of the lake - fast!. Once the normal breathing was resumed I managed to put them back in position ready to rejoin the race. Here we go again. Joined in, felt smooth and catching people and then it happened again !, (repeat new drill). New tactics, stay out of the way, no drafting and swim the race on your own. It worked, no more mishaps and I managed to get out of the water in a less than stella 1:01:20.

Let the race begin.

T1 What was I thinking. Too casual (lack of racing perhaps?), I let a volunteer open my bag and lets just say the T1 time should have been 2 min's quicker than it was. 4:04.

The Bike It's a three loop affair with apparently the same amount of climbing as IM Lanzarote, I'll remember that. Due to my lack of training/racing I kept well within the same HRZ's from previous races hoping that it would keep me somewhere near the 5 hour mark. How wrong they were. On completing the first lap I realised that I needed to up the tempo. New plan - ditch the HR monitor and just go for it - within reason. The second lap was much quicker and I seemed to pass lots, great, just keep eating and spinning. On the third lap the above mentioned seemed to pick up and the lack of gels on the course made the final 20 or so miles seem longer and harder than they should have been. Or was the lack of training going to bite me in the ass? I finished the bike in a respectable 5:12:23, all things considered - happy.

T2 Better, still had a mishap with trainer insoles not wanting to stay in. 1:57

The Run It's a mixture of 2 loops in the castle grounds then out and onto the infamous dual carriageway. For all those people who have done it - you know, for those who enter for next year - you will do. At this point Colette choose to tell me I was in forth place in AG, and the leader was less than 3 min's ahead of me, come on !. Despite my lack of racing/training this year I was still hopeful of getting a 9:30/40 finish and trying to qualify for Kona. I found something out about myself on the run - I can't eat gels and run without retching or throwing up. So I stuck to Coke (checked diet or full fat) and water. Which seemed to work because as the race progressed I seemed to be getting quicker. The last 2/3 miles seemed to pass pretty quickly as the finish adrenaline started to build and the gap was closing all the time. The finish is always a great feeling. This one though I felt I'd earned the title of Ironman though I didn't hear it.

On reflection it was a good day, not a great day but a good day. I managed to PB on less training than I did last year on a day where the conditions did me no favours.

My final time was 9:33:52 4th in AG (by 19 sec's), 28th overall. The best was yet to come - Qualified for Hawaii - Oh yes.

Race how you feel and enjoy the day no matter what, at least you're there doing it!!!.

Again big thanks to my support crew - Colette (wife, manager, cook, back scratcher). Caprice (daughter no 1, best helper, my buddy, my leaning post) and Arabella the family monkey (daughter no 2). Thanks also to the Clients who travelled almost half the length of the country to watch the mad man - Jane, Bonnie, Andy, Gill and Tom.

I salute you!!

Chris Clarke



# [...race reports... ]

## Ironman UK, Sunday 19th August 2007

Report by David Waterhouse

This was my second attempt at the Ironman UK race. I took part in the inaugural event in 2005 where I got attacked by leeches in the lake and had my tyre blow up on the bike section. So there was an element of "unfinished business" as I set off down to Dorset on the Friday before the race. Weather reports had not been good for the race on Sunday with rain and wind forecasted for the big day. I arrived late at the camp-site after a lengthy delay on the M6 due to excessive traffic heading off to the "V" festival at Stafford. Saturday involved the usual registering, bike checking/racking, briefing etc. The weather was poor at this stage with plenty of wind and rain, and I was not very optimistic for the race.

The weather seemed to have improved on Sunday as the competitors changed into their wet-suits ready for the effort ahead. I spotted Bella Comerford, one of the pre-race favourites keeping a low profile between the marquees. The race almost set off on time with only a 20 minute delay due to traffic problems. This was welcomed by some competitors as it gave them more time to swim out to the deep water start line. The course was two laps round the lake which wasn't too arduous as there was plenty of buoys to follow and the lake is quite narrow. Large yellow buoys marked the course with long white ones at each end to mark the turn. It was these white buoys which I desperately looked out for.

The swim over with, it was onto the bikes and onto the 3 lap course. This turned out to be quite technical as it was quite fast cycling down to Dorchester, but hilly and windy on the way back. There was one stretch where the north-westerly wind was directly in your face. During the first lap I was having a chat with a competitor when we heard a kiwi voice shout from behind. It turned out to be Bryan Rhodes the 2005 champion and one of the pre-race favourites. He wanted to pinch a co2 canister from the guy I was talking to, which he proceeded to do mid-pedal stroke whilst being filmed by a cameraman on a motorcycle, I had to drop back and observe. The race is being shown on Channel 4 later in the year so it might be on TV. The local rotary club provided good support handing out powerbars, gels and Gatorade etc. and you had to perfect the slow down and snatch routine. It was on the second lap that the hills that had seemed quite innocuous on the first lap started to bite. The bike course is said to be one of the hardest in the ironman world with over 2000 metres of climbing. It is only when you realise that you have to go over the hills 3 times that it hits home. On the third lap some people were even walking up the hills. I made the bike cut-off by about half an hour which was due to the fact that I had a storming final leg on the tough cycle back from Dorchester where my average speed actually went up. This felt like a big achievement as I got timed out due to my tyre problems two years previously.

I wasted a little bit of time in T2 because I had put my socks in the wrong bag and I had to wait whilst one of the volunteers went to get it. So I ended up with a transition time of over 18 minutes. I felt that it was worth sacrificing time rather than risking having to abandon on the run due to sore feet. The run followed a similar

pattern to the bike where I had an ok start, struggled in the middle and had a good finish. My effort was not enhanced by the fact I missed a turn and ran over a pedestrian bridge twice unnecessarily! As if it wasn't enough running 26.2 miles! After earlier being worried about making the cut-off, it became clear that this was not going to be a problem as I ran the last 6 miles. The last 3 miles were through downtown Sherborne on a Sunday night. There was hardly a soul about which was a bit eerie. All I could think of was making that finish line. Once I turned the corner I saw that there were still quite a few supporters left to cheer the last few finishers. After much high-fiving it was all over and I was an Ironman. There was plenty of food and drink on offer but I was quite bloated and so could only manage soup and a piece of flap-jack. I was speaking to one fellow finisher one minute and the next he went delirious and was carted off by the St. Johns Ambulance. I was one of the slower finishers but when I consider that over 100 people hadn't finished the race it made me feel satisfied that I had made it.



**Vitruvian Middle Distance Tri, Saturday 8th September 2007**

Report by Rob Harper

Sitting in the tent eating breakfast by torchlight at 4:30am was certainly a "what the hell am I doing" moment. It's a somewhat eerie start to the Vitruvian tri with hundreds of people wandering around in the dark bleary eyed trying to sort out bikes etc. But soon the sun was rising over Rutland Water and the atmosphere was building ready for the start of the race, which was also this year's middle distance national champs.

The 1900m swim was a two-lap affair with the novelty of a short beach run between laps; although there wasn't any ITU style "it's a knockout" grappling when I came out of the water! The swim was fairly uneventful (as usual), few sighting issues with the first buoy being straight into the rising sun, and the second one bloody miles away.

The bike course is two laps of the Dambuster course and comes in at about 51 miles. The main talking point is the so called "Rutland Ripple", three climbs one after the other. I'd not had the chance to go round the course before the race but I assumed that these would probably not be as bad as some people make out (especially when training on a diet of Brickworks, Windgather, Cat etc). Other than that there are long fast sections on generally good road surface, another hill towards the end of the lap and some tedious drags on the A606 back to race HQ. There was also a stiff Westerly breeze giving a headwind on the A606, this was particularly felt immediately on turning out of the Rutland centre; pushing hard and only going 15/16mph is not a good sign!

Spent most of the bike pushing a steady pace and trying to get gels and fluid down. The hills were quite welcome as a chance to get out of the saddle and have a bit of a stretch. By the end of the first lap I was just about on my target pace but feeling pretty comfy, plenty of fluids left so no need to mess around with the bottle swap and straight out onto lap 2. More of the same really and kept on roughly the same pace. Came into T2 on about 2:28 for the bike, inside my target of 2:30 and set up well for the run.

The run course is 21km, two out and backs across the dam and round to Normanton church; flat apart from a couple of short climbs near the start. Plenty of aid stations along the way so no chance of going hungry or thirsty, and a good crowd at the HQ end of things. First km was a bit slow as I needed a quick, err, comfort break let's say, but after that I got going although it took until the first turn for my calf muscles to loosen up and my left foot to feel properly attached to the rest of my body. I was using the recommended "quarters" pacing plan i.e. easy for the first quarter, up a gear for quarters two and three, then up another gear everything you've got for the final quarter. This worked pretty well and I never really felt uncomfortable on the run. Out and back runs are always good for seeing everyone else racing and I again saw Helen and Dan, plus ex-MTC Jan Rogers. I'm sure I must have gone past Natalie too at some point so apologies for blanking you!

Around the final corner and a bit of a pointless sprint finish to the line (well a race is a race!). Finished in 4:37:40, well inside my 4:45 target so I was chuffed. I really enjoyed the race, it's very well organized and there was a great atmosphere; I'd thoroughly recommend it to anyone looking to do a middle distance race next year. Dan also came in under 5 hours, and Helen and Natalie finished within a couple of minutes of each other, both well under 6 hours. Good performances all.



**Monday**

RUN Hill sessions 6.30-7.30pm Check the calendar for dates  
 SWIM Manchester Aquatics 8.00-9.30pm

**Tuesday**

SWIM Moss Side 6.30-8am  
 SWIM Moss Side 6.30-8pm  
 BIKE Moss Side (turbo) 8.00-9:15pm Winter Only

**Wednesday**

RUN Longford Park 6.30-8pm

**Thursday**

SWIM Moss Side 6.30-8.00am  
 SWIM Manchester Aquatics 8.30-9.30pm  
 Plus core strength session poolside 8.00-8.30pm

**Friday**

BIKE Stretford Leisure Centre (turbo) 7.30-8.45pm  
 SWIM Stretford Leisure Centre 9.00-10.00pm

**Saturday**

SWIM Moss Side 8.00-9.30am  
 BIKE Moss Side (turbo session) 10.00-11.00am Winter Only  
 BIKE/RUN Longford Park (brick training) 10.00am-12.00pm Summer Only

**Sunday**

BIKE Didsbury 9.00am Winter Only  
 RUN Winter scramble (fell run) Check the calendar for dates  
 SWIM Manchester Aquatics 6.30-7.30pm

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