

Two triathlons in two days: A story of buckled wheels, lost shoes and unlimited free beer...

A large contingency of the St Austell Triathletes headed to Nottingham over the weekend of 30th May 2014, to compete in the 'Outlaw' Half Iron distance tri on Sunday, 1st June. This consisted of a 1.2 mile lake swim, 56 mile cycle (which was really 57) and to top it all off, a 13.1 mile run, consecutively.

To some, that wasn't enough... So the 'Nutter' (Garry Player), the 'Numpty' (Lisa Player) and the 'Nincompoop' (Stuart Nicholas – all will be revealed later) decided to do a world championship qualifier on the Saturday, to try and get the hallowed tri suit with your surname printed across your bottom, and represent GB. This was a sprint race of 750m swim, 12 mile bike and 3 mile run. The one and only Marilyn Mitchell also competed in this event, but not the half iron on the Sunday.

As far as I am aware, the swim was pretty 'normal' for an open water race – daunting for the inexperienced, good fun for the experienced. Arms windmilling and sometimes literally punching for swim space, timing kicks to stop those behind from drafting you, swimming over people if they get in your way – it's also not uncommon for your goggles to be kicked off your face by a fellow competitor, it's also part of the thrill.

The bike? Simply four laps around the boating lake, when drafting is not legal – hard when you're in a bunch of 15 or so competitors and everyone must be no closer than 7 metres from the person in front, unless overtaking. Its also eyeballs out, no hills.. nowhere to hide. 12 miles of quad mashing gear grinding madness (It is fun, honest!) Now on the final lap, you were directed into a separate transition area from where you originally kept your bike, to then rack your bike and put your running shoes on, to start the run. Guess which nincompoop left his running shoes in the other (now closed) transition? Yep, you guessed it. This forced my hand into running the 3 miles, barefoot. Thankfully the lake is flanked by a lot of grass (and accompanying swan and goose poo) so fortunately I could run on that. Upon beating a competitor to the line with a sprint finish Usain Bolt would be proud of, the head race scrutineer took great pleasure in informing me that I was disqualified from the results due to not wearing any shoes, and quoting the relevant regulation. Bugger. Lesson learnt = don't opt to go for a last minute visit to the loo, in lieu of missing the race brief.

Lisa, Garry and Marilyn however had incident free races, and are currently awaiting confirmation of qualification, if they are to succeed.

HALF IRON REPORT ON NEXT PAGE

Outlaw Half Iron Distance

Race day – alarm goes off at 03:00, to boil up some water on the stove and have just-add-water porridge at 03:30, to reap the benefits come the start at 06:30.

A wave system was put in place, done by age category so we all had staggered starts. Me, Matt Nicholas and Steve Covus had a 06:30 start, Chris Phillips, Garry Player, Darren Stephens and Michael Crane had a 06:40 start, Mel Rowe, Lisa Player and Kayleigh Grose started at 07:00.

The swim was a simple case of swim 1000 metres up (equivalent of 40 lengths of a 25m pool) across for 50 metres then swim back for another 1000 metres. Nothing of note really happened, other than concentrating on swimming in a straight line (harder than it sounds!) around the inflatable buoys and thinking about the next few hours on the bike.

Into T1. Locate bike (next to Matt's!), put on and fasten helmet, shoes on, stuff a 'Clif' bar up my tri suit leg, run to the mount line and think about nothing but cycling for the next 56/57 miles. Nottingham is relentlessly flat so the miles just ticked by, and before knowing it I was nearly bonking ('hitting the wall' in running terms) at mile 50. However, it is a case of man the f**k up and get on with it in triathlon, as you've a run to do afterwards. The sun was already beating down on us all, maxing out at over 20 degrees. It would be hotter for those who started at 07:00.

Unfortunately, we were a man down by mile 46, as Mel had to drop out due to stacking it into a ditch, and buckling her front wheel.. but she tried to cycle on, but it was mechanically impossible. Knowing Mel, she'll be back to right that wrong in one hell of a fashion!

The last miles are through a private estate with speed bumps, and worryingly sharp-edged looking improvised ramps put over them... Didn't amuse my tyres though, being inflated to 160psi.

Into T2, rack bike and take helmet off. Socks and running shoes on, to tackle two laps of the lake with an 'out and back' style dog-leg, to make the run the bona fide 13.1 miles. A flat, hot, 'when will i get to the other side of this bl**dy lake?' kind of morning pursued.

As a running club, you'd think the run discipline would be our strongest discipline. May be true, but one of our comrades battled on, despite having a broken sesamoid bone in her foot. She even postponed her corrective operation in order to do the event. Kayleigh Grose, WELL DONE!!

Another special mention to Lisa Player for coming third in her age group.

Every other STARC athlete completed, and Chris 'The Fish' Phillips raised over £600 for Diabetes UK. Should you wish to donate, please following this link:

<https://www.justgiving.com/Chris-Phillips15>

Oh, and the free beer? Erdinger Alkoholfrei isotonic lager!

Finally see below a table of results for STARCies:

	Swim	T1	Bike	T2	Run	Finish Time	Finishing Position /1106
Garry Player	37.47	6.07	2:47.14	2.43	2:07.53	5:43.12	503
Lisa Player	40.11	5.55	3:05.28	2.36	2:01.37	5:56.27	651
Michael Crane	44.58	3.00	2:49.15	1.51	2:26.76	6:07.00	735
Kayleigh Grose	41.40	4:45	3:15.20	2.20	2:06.00	6:04.51	718
Matt Nicholas	37.46	3.32	2:58.01	1.58	1:44.79	5:24.36	338
Stuart Nicholas	32.17	2:29	2:43.25	2.26	1:25.49	4:47.06	71
Chris Phillips	33.43	2:41	2:39.53	2.56	1:51.29	5:10.42	210
Darren Stephens	42.11	4.32	3:01.08	3.07	1:59.26	5:51.04	586
Steve Covus	57.51	4.06	3:44.04	3.26	3:31.84	7:41.51	1083
Mel Rowe	54.49	4.51	DNF				

By Stuart Nicholas