



Up and *running*

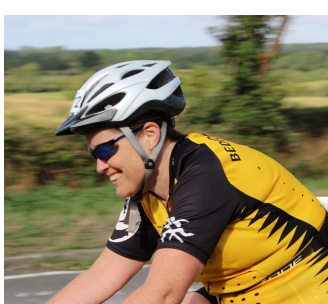
18th September 2019 Issue 3

Bedford Triathlon - 11th August 2019 - Elaine Massie

A successful inaugural Bedford Harriers Triathlon took place last month on The Embankment. Race Director, Justin Burrell, and his team pulled together an amazing event, which included a swim in the Great Ouse, a bike course around the surrounding villages including a climb up the Greensands Ridge and a run around The Embankment and Russell Park.

The event was well-supported by Bedford Harriers, as competitors, marshals and supporters. Feedback on the event highlighted how friendly and helpful the volunteers were; I can definitely vouch for the guys who helped us all out of the river up the ramp.

Many of us are already looking forward to Bedford Triathlon 2020!



Dates for the diary

29 September 2019 - **Squeaky Bone Relay**

27-29 September 2019 – **Run Weekend with Colin Papworth** in the Peak District

4 October - **Friday Night Circuits start** - 18:30-19:30 - £3 per session

1 December 2019 – **Bedford Harriers Half Marathon – Entries now open!**

18 January 2020 - **Awards night**

8 March 2020 - **Grizzly 2020 – hills aplenty** - Club entries are being organised by Ian Kingstone

29 March 2020 – **Bedford Harriers Oakley 20**

13 June 2020 - **35th Anniversary Celebration** - Bedford Rugby Club

Club Championship Races

6 October 2019 – **Standalone 10k**

13 October 2019 – **Great Eastern Half Marathon** (Peterborough)

19 October 2019 – **Endurance Life Suffolk Ultra**

Multisport Championship Races

20th October – **Cowman Duathlon**

3 Counties Cross-Country

3rd November 2019 - **Wellingborough and District**

24th November 2019 - **Leighton Fun Runners**

8th December 2019 - **Wootton Road Runners**

15th December 2019 - **North Herts Road Runners**

12 January 2020 - **Dunstable**

Michelle Boyden - Jacinta Horne

I am very sad to have to report that a former Bedford Harrier, Michelle Boyden, passed away in June. Michelle was a Harrier on and off from 1997 to 2000 and again from 2012. She battled her illness for a long time and was only 52 when she died. Michelle was a lovely, lively, funny lady and was hoping to get back with us, but this was sadly not to be. She will be missed.

A Success of Harriers! - Hever Castle Festival of Endurance - Elaine Massie

On 7th July 2019, 28 Bedford Harriers took on the challenge of various multi-sports and running events at the Hever Castle Festival of Endurance. This included the club championship middle distance event – the Gauntlet.

Many of us camped in the grounds of the castle and “enjoyed” the sound of planes flying overhead throughout the day and night without the anticipated view of the castle. Sadly, the sound of the planes was drowned out by the sound of rain on canvas during Saturday night and into Sunday morning – not what we were expecting when we were desperately seeking shade the previous day!

The swim was in the lake overlooked by the castle and a rather lovely looking Japanese Tearoom, which was also at the junction with the river. While the lake was relatively warm, the river was several degrees cooler and I was



Transition was a 200m or so run from the lake along a slippery path which took us alongside some beautiful rose gardens (I only know this because I walked it the previous day, not because I was looking at the flowers during the race!) as well as the crowds of tourists visiting the castle.

As I was competing in the aquathlon, I was saved the torture of the bike route. It was a hilly course, which even the seasoned triathletes described as brutal and relentless!

In my opinion the run was quite brutal too! I dislike cross-country almost as much as I hate hills; this course combined 10.5k of both! The weather was still quite gloomy but getting

Once I finished, I could relax and take in the atmosphere and cheer in fellow Harriers who were competing in other events. The weather took a turn and the sun came out, which was nice for us spectators, but made the already brutal course even more brutal for those still out competing.

Bedford Harriers was by far the biggest club present; as the commentator said, we were a ‘Success of Bedford Harriers’. A new collective noun for Bedford Harriers maybe?

Congratulations to all those who competed, but especially those who podiumed:

Aquabike – standard distance

Lynne Greenard – 1st F70-74
Elaine Fullard – 2nd F55-59
David Elliott – 2nd M45-49
Sally Johston – 3rd F50-54

Aquathlon – standard distance

David Brewer – 1st M55-59

The Gauntlet – half-ironman

Nora Haggart – 1st FV60
Simon King – 1st MV60
Juliet Nayler – 2nd FV40
Alastair Fadden – 2nd MV50



Finally, Jenny King summed the course up perfectly “What a venue! What a HUMUNGOUSLY HILLIOUS course!! Truly, the ONLY flat element was the water! But what fun!!!”

Winter Running Safety - Jacinta Horne

It's nearly that time again, the time when we go fluorescent. The change from light evenings to dark is always sad and it means a change in training. Gone are the ambles across fragrant, flower filled meadows and beautiful country runs, back to the pavements and the poor lighting.

Please don't blame your coaches for repeated routes and sessions. It is better to be safe, in areas known to be better lit than to be tripping over the uneven pavements and tree roots that you can't see.

So, what can you do to make things safer?

- Wear white or fluorescent training tops – this helps other pedestrians to see you as well as car drivers and cyclists
- Wear bibs or tabards with reflective strips, the more and the bigger the strips the better – this reflects well in car lights.
- Do not wear black. Many training tops come with a small sliver of reflective strip, but this is not enough.
- Do not run too close to your fellow runner. If the runner in front of you suddenly dodges away from uneven pavements or obstacles, you need to be far enough back to be able to react yourself.
- Torches can be useful, but care must be taken not to blind people when you look at them and head torches are not the best to use.
- Use the schedule on the website to check what your group is doing, so that you are sure you feel up to doing that route/session on a dark night.

Weighty Issues—Jacinta Horne

Weighty Issues is a Lazy Gang sideline (Lazy Gang being our weekend running group). It is a fun way to keep an eye on our weight whilst raising a bit of money for charity. Some have had a great deal of success with losing stones, others with losing pounds and some of us just use it to stay on an even keel. Anyway, the main thing is that over the two years we have been going we have raised no less than £1,590.50 for some great causes.

£200 - Autism Bedfordshire
£152 - Cancer Research
£186 - Well Child
£297 - East Anglia Air Ambulance
£279 - Motor Neurone
£202 - Centre Point
£274.50 - Parkinson's Society

I am very proud of this fact and felt we should share it with you. If anyone has any interest in joining us, I can send you the details if you email me – jacinta.horne@ntlworld.com.

Couch-to-Tri - The Class of 2019 - Elaine Massie

One Friday evening in mid-May, a group of triathlon hopefuls met with Melly Burrell and her team of coaches for an induction into the Couch-to-Tri programme. The aim was to get us ready for the Club Championship Sprint Triathlon at Box End on 21st July 2019! Most of us had never swam in open water, some of us hadn't been on a road bike - ever, so with only 10 weeks of training, the pressure was on!

The plan was to run with our own Harrier groups on Mondays and Wednesdays, with additional runs on our own. In addition to this, we had coached pool sessions, open water swimming, some coached bike rides and some bike skills and maintenance sessions and a session on transition.

The training was intense, lots of sessions to fit in each week, with some extra rest days added in when we were a bit jaded. Triathlon is not something to be dipped in and out of, it's all or nothing! The best bit about the training was getting up at 5am on Tuesday mornings, in order to be poolside for 6am! The coached swim sessions were so useful though, and definitely worth the early alarms! Our swimming improved hugely over the course of the 10-weeks.

Swimming had two elements to it in training, the nice warm pool and then Box End Lake! Our first encounter at Box End was at the end of April, when we took the opportunity to use a demo wetsuit. It was a great idea, but it was a bitterly cold day, and the lake was a uncomfortable 11°C. It wasn't a pleasant swim and we didn't go very far, we did learn that ice-cream head was not nice when swimming! Our next experience of open water swimming was in May and much more warmer and a somewhat more pleasant experience.

The bike was a huge challenge for some of us, for others, well, it was like riding a bike and second nature! Melly, Simon Fisher and Nick Beardow took us in the rain to Harold-Odell Country Park, taking in some horrendous hills, which were tough going up and terrifying coming down. The only saving grace was the cake at the halfway point! Gary Finch took us on a hill session, which meant I forgave the other coaches for the gentle inclines, as Gary made us ride up and down Hay Lane numerous times. Cycling isn't something I find easy! Fortunately, the bike route on the Sprint Tri had very few hills.

Race day came, the early rises for swimming helped prepare us for the early registration at 6am. Bikes racked and transition set-up, it had been cool all week and so it was a wetsuit race, much to our relief. The mass swim start was good for most and the bike route was nice and dry. The run is 5.2k trail run around Box End Park, with a surprisingly brutal hill section. All of us who entered the race finished and we graduated proudly as the Class of 2019.



Since July, many of us have entered other triathlons, aquathlons and aquabike races, and entered as teams in relays. We have arranged training sessions together, mainly at Box End lake but also on bike rides. As a group, we helped each other throughout the training programme hugely, via a FB messenger group and on our group sessions. Thanks to everyone in the group and a huge thanks to all of the coaches.

Escape from Alcatraz Triathlon – San Francisco, 9th June 2019 - Paul Stuart

The iconic nature of the stretch of water around Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay makes the Escape from Alcatraz Triathlon a sought-after race. Having entered the ballot routinely for several years, I was surprised to receive an email in November 2018 informing me that I had a place!

At 04:00 on race day, I left the hotel to rack my bike in transition and then take the shuttle bus to Pier 3 to board The Hornblower, a 3-deck paddle steamer. The boat had been cleared to accommodate the 2,000 wetsuit clad race participants ready for a 06:30 launch. The 45 minutes it took to sail across the bay to Alcatraz Island passed by as if it were 45 seconds. Then as the 07:30 race start approached, the commentator whipped up the atmosphere with all the pomp and circumstance that you would expect from an iconic race in the U.S.

The race start was signalled by the ship sounding its horn. On entering the water, I was pleased as the temperature was not as cold as I had expected. After swimming for 300m or so I encountered “the river” and the temperature dropped significantly, and I needed to adjust my direction far more frequently as the current wanted to take me to my right toward Golden Gate Bridge.

I was a little unnerved as I could see so many swimmers heading away from me in the direction of the bridge. However, I maintained a heading toward the landmark sight point, I focussed on the information in the briefing where the organisers stressed the importance of “swimming across the river” and crossing the fast-flowing tide almost immediately after jumping from The Hornblower. If you do not cross the river quickly the current takes you way past the swim exit and you end up exiting the water several beaches beyond the assigned swim finish. The key was sticking strictly to the sight points we were briefed on. I got the navigation spot on, and I crossed “the river” and then the current took me with a slingshot effect and all I had to do was push hard to arrive at the swim exit beach. Many other athletes weren't as fortunate ...



As my fellow Bedford Harrier triathletes know, my swim is usually my weakest discipline and I have to rely on strength on the bike and dogged determination on the run if I am to compete with other more adept swimmers. Well for once I completed the swim knowing that all had gone well and when I looked at my watch to see a swim time of 39:27 I was chuffed to bits as this was a PB for the distance. I think I had the current to thank for this one.

So, into transition and although I was very cold from the swim, it was a clear day and the Californian sun was warming everyone up very nicely. The bike course was short in comparison to the distances I'm used to. However, the San Francisco city hills made the 18-mile bike course a bit like riding up and down Cemetery Hill for an hour and a bit.

The trail run took us under the Golden Gate Bridge on an out and back route that was on and off road with most of the off-road being on the beach. This made the going very tough and it ended with an ascent of “the sand ladder”, 400 steep steps cut into the cliff from the beach to the highway (this feature was very similar to the “Stairway to Heaven” in the Grizzly but just quite a bit warmer).

After making the climb, the course headed back to the finish line which was located at Marina Green immediately opposite Alcatraz Island. I crossed the line exhausted but satisfied.



The race had lived up to its billing and to its status on so many bucket lists. The iconic nature of the swim provided all racers with a massive sense of achievement and for me, well, this was the first time in any triathlon my swim had been the best part of my race.

Race result:

Swim: 39:27 Bike: 1:04:10 Run: 1:11:00 Total: 3:07:17