

A date to remember..... Sunday 20th May 2007..... My first triathlon!!!

Well, I can't believe I actually did it, I managed to complete the Leicester Triathlon clubs Flashman triathlon at Lutterworth. I didn't actually enter until about 5 days before so a big thanks to those who organised it and managed to 'squeeze' me in! Being a sprint distance I was happy to give it a go and am in awe of those who manage to do longer distances and amazingly fast times.

If your thinking of entering your first triathlon, don't give it a second thought,,,,,, just go for it. I wasn't going to enter as I didn't want to be last....BUT Having thought about it, on reflection, I would have been more frustrated and angry over not entering than not even trying.

It was an early start with 3 kiddies to drop off at the grandparents, bikes and boxes to load and last minute checks to do. We were officially on the road around 10 o'clock and I was grateful of the 1 o'clock start time. We got to Lutterworth just after 11:00 ready to register and full of nerves. Registration was easy and quick and I was pleased to see I had an early start time. I got my race number but it wasn't until my number was written on my arms that the excitement of what was ahead actually became a reality.

Transition was open from 11:45 so there was plenty of time to have a walk from the pool to the transition area, and enough time to set up the bike and get everything ready to go.

So..... On to the event itself.....

It wasn't long before I found myself by the side of the pool wondering what the hell I was doing here and thinking I must be mad. Hat and goggles on, I felt like a fool, but least no one would recognise me!

The swim was fine, after a couple of panicked lengths the nerves went and I soon found a comfortable rhythm, not Olympic front crawl but a steady breast stroke. 16 lengths seemed to fly by although I was lapped once, but that didn't put me off. I was happy just to carry on doing my own thing and concentrate on the task in hand. Then onto the transition. I'm so glad I kept my top at the pool side, I didn't fancy running in just my Speedo cossy (not a pretty site I can tell you!!!!).

A tip to anyone, think through your transition and practice it! Although I thought it through, I managed to put my trainers on before my cycling shorts and leave my towel by the pool..... So a few extra seconds (I'd like to say minutes) added for T1!

The bike ride was really enjoyable and not half as bad as I thought it would be. Just remember to 'dig in' as at one point I seemed to forget it was a race and was happy just peddling along as though it was a Sunday trip out. I was relieved, but maybe a little sad to see the end of the bike ride. I'd estimated 1 hr to complete this so was please to see a time of 44mins on my clock.

So T2.....Helmet off, and run..... RUN???. Hang on, my legs told me.....You must be joking! It all felt pretty unnatural. It went OK though. Thinking back I'm sure I could have gone faster but being my first time, I was really happy just to pace myself and get a feel for how things progress. I have to admit, I was overtaken quite a few times on the run and began to wonder how on earth these people manage to run so fast, speed is not my strong point, although running is what I enjoy the most. The short country lane suddenly felt like the longest distance I'd ever run.... NO I'pods allowed!

Crossing the finish line was great, I tried a bit of a sprint but only for the last 30 seconds or so. The marshals and spectators were great and very encouraging, one of the main things that keep me going. My time was 1hr 36 and although no where near as quick as some, I had hoped to finish in 2hrs, so 1:36, I was very pleased with.

Remember, you don't have to be a mega fit athlete, do hours of training and have loads of fancy kit to try a triathlon. I 'm just a normal 27yr old mummy with 3 children (1, 2 and 6) and just finishing felt like an amazing achievement in itself.

What a fantastic day, I had an absolutely brill time.

Jayne Wallis