



Jersey Triathlon Club – Off Road Duathlon, 18 January 2014

This was the first event of 2014 and a first in the terrain to be raced on. With a mix of experienced triathletes and mountain bike riders, it was an event with no pre - race favourites. Some were competing individually and others in teams, splitting up the run and bike sections. However the heavens opened half an hour before the senior race and the course quickly turned into a mud bath and some of the worst conditions even experienced athletes had raced in. The format of a 1.5 mile run over 3 laps and followed by 5 laps of Mont Rossignol mountain bike course and closing with a final 1 mile run, was going to test all competitors with added mud and cold conditions to contend with.

The first run leg started fast as expected, with Ollie Turner leading from the front and a few seniors (including ex Commonwealth Triathlete Tim Rogers who was wearing his helmet already...marginal gains Tim, marginal gains...) trying to chase him down. Ollie held position throughout the awful conditions and arrived into transition 1 strong, well ahead of the rest of the field and started the bike section with a solid lead. The scantily clad Ironman expert Minky Charlton was next in to hand over to specialist biker team mate Robin Ovenden who shot after Ollie in fast pursuit. The other runners trickled in, all showing tenacity and strength in the horrific conditions.

Out on the bike course, Robin soon caught Ollie but did not pull away as expected as the Junior showed skill and tenacity on the testing course. The expected chase from Rhys Hidrio did not materialise as a broken chain on lap one meant a DNF for him and team mate Matt Ebbrell.

First lady onto the bike was Carol Knight, but she was being caught by Helene Mon Petit Le Brun who was now on her strong discipline.

Many riders had excursions into bushes or slid off their bikes as they battled the slippery conditions, including Ovenden who had the fastest bike split and another DNF was Jonny Flanagan with a puncture.

Into transition 2 first was Ovenden who handed back to Minky, who put in a solid run and sealed the victory overall and was first team in a time of 54:08. The first individual, and an awesome performance came from Ollie Turner in 55:31. Mountain biker James Patterson was second, just a further 2 minutes behind, possibly a duathlete / triathlete of the future James?

The ladies race was hotting up after Helene put in the fastest split by 6 minutes to be two and a half minutes in front, however Carol Knight was back to her preferred discipline and put in a second run split that was almost 4 minutes quicker and took the victory.

It was great to see many first timers (and experienced duathletes and triathletes) turning out, despite the weather all agreed it was a great format and would look forward to another event.

Jersey Triathlon club wishes to thank the landowners, Normandy Rescue, and all the marshals and timer keepers for making the event possible. Special thanks to Colin Hidrio for trailblazing this new event.