

Jersey Triathlon Club

Race Report – Winter Duathlon, 17 February 2013

The first of the Pedal Power duathlon series took place on Sunday 17 February at 8am. Weather conditions were perfect for the race comprising a 5K run, a 20K bike and a final 2.5K run.

The first run was 2 loops of a hard course that took in a sharp steep climb up the hill towards Rozel before descending back down towards St Catherine's Woods and returning back towards the breakwater and looping round the rock. The pack broke up quicker than expected with Dan Halksworth and Tom Perchard setting a blistering pace up front. Smaller groups formed, with the inseparable Nick and Jo Gorrod coming into transition together, being chased down by Mike Charlton, Mike Du Feu, Robbie Cambell and the experienced technical runner John Coote. Other groups were forming elsewhere in the race as the runners stretched their legs in the first duathlon of the season.

The first transition was a frantic affair for many and those new to the sport quickly realised the importance of this discipline. Rushed hands wrestled with shoe laces and gloves, bikes were dropped and a few early dismounts were gently discouraged from the race crew. A snapped elastic band and a dropped chain (twice) lost Mike Du Feu over a minute although he put his understandable frustration to good use and put an excellent bike split in. Everyone got safely out but think we will be offering some hints and tips on transition in the next few weeks...

The bike ride was a two lap effort out to long beach and back. This undulating course proved more challenging than expected for many competitors despite the excellent conditions, but it was a good course to track progress against other close competitors and there were many position switches throughout the race.

A few riders managed to post a bike split shy of 40 minutes, but the majority were over; an indication that parts of the course were quite technical and the short climbs were zapping the strength in the legs of the racers.

A special mention and thank you to Tom Perchard who managed to skilfully dodge my three year old daughter who wondered in front of his bike, oops (I thought the organisers were supposed to help, not hinder races...sorry Tom). Thankfully though, everyone managed to stay upright, even Bomber Lee (who is rather fond of granite walls) stayed on two wheels...

As the athletes came into the final transition, it was clear Dan had established a solid lead, but only a few seconds separated Nathan and Tom in 2nd and 3rd. Further back, a number of groups had formed and racers were arriving into transition in waves...a time keepers nightmare (chip timing next year if the numbers increase!?)

Steve Price had put in an excellent bike split to put Nick Gorrod in his sight as he entered transition, but could he reel in the veteran athlete well known on island for his running ability? Della Roderick, Sarah Corcoran and Sam Lee were showing their strength and all came into transition with less than 15 seconds separating them; Sam lost a few valuable seconds when she realised there was no space for her bike, but experience showed and she calmly placed her bike safely out of transition and changed into running shoes to begin the final stage.

The final run was another 2 lap circuit, athletes looped round St Catherine's rock and headed down the breakwater, doing a dead turn half way along before heading back to transition. The cobbles certainly slowed a few runners down, but there were some fast time splits put in.

Tom Perchard put in the quickest run of the day and was the only athlete to go under ten minutes although Dan had to fight off a (medium sized) dog on his first lap and contrary to popular belief – it was not set on him to slow him down.

Johnny Flanagan also put in a good run split and clawed back a few places but in the main – the final placings were decided early on in the run and people held on well to finish strong. All 36 athletes completed the course, no disqualifications, no DNF's and in this instance – no time penalties! (We might need to be a little stricter on the next race with regards to transition!)

All things considered, a great effort by all that entered and the club hopes that we can maintain the numbers as move further into the race season.

Thank you to the marshals, time keepers, race crew, Normandy Rescue and anyone else forgotten. The next duathlon is on March 10, but looks like we may need to switch location due to roadworks. Keep you posted...