

The beautiful surroundings of Blenheim Palace hosted the prestigious Blenheim Triathlon on the weekend of the 6th and 7th June where Andover Triathlon club members Kieron Parnell, Peter Dennett and Tony Ebdon took part. The televised sprint distance race was spread out over the two days and attracted over 3500 competitors which included a number of professional triathletes hoping to gain valuable points as part of the British Triathlon race series. First up for Andover and racing on the Saturday was Peter Dennett who was greeted by heavy rain and cold conditions. Undeterred he tackled the 750m open water swim well overtaking a number of people to finally exit the lake with a time of 16mins 01 secs to go on to start the technical bike section. With the rain still coming down hard, the multi lap course, which used the service roads of the Palace, was treacherous in places and many competitors were falling victim to the slippery surfaces. Dennett, a strong cyclist, took the decision to be cautious, which finally paid off towards the end of the 20km route where he avoided a large crash, which brought the race momentarily to a standstill, to get a time of 41mins 14secs. After a busy marathon season which has seen Peter run races in Rome, Barcelona, Rotterdam and Vienna to name but a few, the comparatively short 5km run at Blenheim was to prove a faultless task and he was strong throughout completing in 26mins 39secs with a total race time of 1.31.22 placing 910th overall.

Sundays racing saw better weather conditions for Kieron Parnell and Tony Ebdon as the rain had subsided. First out of the lake was Ebdon in 15 mins 29 secs followed quickly behind by Parnell in 15.43. Onto the bike it was Ebdon who exited Transition one first with Parnell struggling to get his wetsuit off. Parnell's troubles were to continue on the bike where the heavy rain from the day before had washed debris onto the course and he picked up punctures in both front and rear wheels, effectively ending his race. Ebdon remained trouble free to complete the bike course in a time of 37.25. The run saw Ebdon continue to perform and he finished strongly in a time of 24mins 11secs to get a total time of 1hr 22mins 46secs placing 195th overall. Parnell despite his troubles on the bike continued to complete the run in 35.07 to finish in a total time of 2.00.52.

The weekend also saw Andover Triathlon club member Baz Farquhar take part in the Weymouth middle distance triathlon held on Sunday 7th June. The race comprised of a 1900m sea swim, 56 mile bike course and a 13.1 mile half marathon run. Conditions were good and the rough seas of the previous week had calmed to allow for a less daunting swim and to let Baz complete this section of the race in a time of 46mins 51secs. Next the bike course took the competitors out of Weymouth on a double out and back loop and Baz soon got into a comfortable rhythm overtaking a number of other competitors where he made up considerable ground recording a time of 2hrs 55mins 44 secs which included both transitions. The run was a two lap affair around the town and Baz completed in 1hr 45 mins 56 secs to get a total finishing time and a new personal best of 5hrs 28mins 11secs placing 169th out of 280 competitors.