

Andover Triathlon Club member Nikki Fleming travelled to the island of Guernsey to take part in the Graniteman 70.3 middle distance triathlon on September 6th. The race was made up of a 1900m sea swim, a 56 mile cycle followed by a half marathon run and was Nikki's first attempt at this distance having only completed her first triathlon one year ago. Aside from the desire to complete for her own personal goals the main focus for Nikki was to race in memory of her friend who passed away last year and to raise money for the Hospice of St Francis in Berkhamsted.

A glorious sunrise greeted the 46 starters as they entered the calm sea water which favoured strong swimmer Nikki who posted a highly commendable time of 26 mins 42 secs exiting the water as 2nd placed female. After a quick change in Transition one, it was onto the two lap bike course around the picturesque coastline where she put in a fantastic effort to complete the undulating route in now very warm but breezy conditions in a time of 3 hours 11 mins. A smooth Transition two saw her take some energy foods on board and set off on the 13.1 mile run which was also a two lap affair taking in many of the coastal paths with breathtaking scenery. With tiredness setting in and lap one completed she found the immense grit and stamina needed to complete lap two finishing the run in an excellent time of 1 hour 47 mins, crossing the line with a total combined time of 5 hours 24 mins and 53 secs placing 30th overall.

Also representing Andover on the same weekend, again in a middle distance race, was Andrew Woodhouse who took part in the Vitruvian triathlon which was held at the Rutland Water reservoir in Leicestershire. This was also Andrew's first race at this distance and he was keen to put six months of hard training into action along with over 1000 other competitors and had a target completion time of under 6 hours. The swim went well and he exited the water in 36 mins to head into transition one to collect his bike to start the first of two hilly laps which were hindered by blustery conditions making the going tougher. With the 56 miles completed in 2 hours 48 mins and a fast transition two he set off on the half marathon run which was two out and back style laps within the confines of the reservoir. A strong run saw a time of 2 hours 11 mins achieved and a total finishing time of 5 hours 48 mins.

With the race season now drawing to a close, Andover Triathlon club members will be returning to a winter training program to work on strength and technique over the coming months to prepare for the 2010 season. The club welcomes new members and runs friendly structured sessions in all disciplines with qualified coaches catering for all abilities. For details of these sessions, information about the club and membership please go to www.andovertriathlon.org.uk.

