

The first weekend of August saw three members of Andover triathlon club travel to Bolton to take on the challenge of the UK Ironman Triathlon. The event comprised of a 2.4mile open water swim, a 112 mile cycle and a 26.2 mile marathon run and is rightfully hailed as one of the toughest races on the planet and considered by many triathletes as the ultimate goal. Chris Thompson, Dave Hall and Baz Farquhar made the trip up to Lancashire, which had suffered over a months worth of rain in the space of a few days leading up to the event, putting considerable strain on its organisation especially in many of the competitor areas which were badly flooded and very muddy. However, after many months of training the trio did not let the poor conditions effect them, especially Hall, for whom this was his first Ironman race, which he did for local childrens charity, Naomi House, raising over £3000. After many hours on the road it was Thompson who finished first for Andover in a highly commendable time of 12hrs 42mins and 52 secs placing 497th overall out of 1500 competitors with Hall running an impressive marathon he finished shortly after in 12:45:38 placing 513th and Farquhar in 13:27:44 (749th).

On the same weekend, seven members travelled to the capital to race in the London Triathlon. Attracting 13,000 competitors over the course of the weekend, it is the biggest of its kind in the world. Dan Mason took part in Saturdays sprint distance race which included a 750 metre open water swim in London's docklands, a 20k cycle around closed roads in the city and 5k run. After an initially tough swim he faired well on the bike and PB'd the run to finish in 1hr 19mins 35secs placing 109th out of 1517 in his group. Sunday was the Olympic distance race (1500m swim, 40k cycle, 10k run) and saw seven ATC members take part in various start times during the day. Fastest time for Andover and wrapping up a great first season was Tony Ebdon in 2hrs 21mins 46 secs, followed shortly after by Paul Wills in 2:29:55, Paul Holmes 2:42:08, Dave Upton 2:44:20 and Kieron Parnell 2:54:34. Peter Dennett unfortunately suffered double punctures once again this year proving lightening can indeed strike twice eventually finishing in 2:57:06 and Jase Briley crashed heavily nearing the end of the bike course injuring himself which hindered him on the run but he battled on to finish in 2:57:14. Local triathletes James Utting and Dave Peacock also raced with Utting finishing in 2:13:47 and Peacock 2:44:24. For anyone interested in Andover Triathlon, details of club membership and training sessions catering for all abilities can be found on www.andovertriathlon.org.uk

