

NEW FOREST TRIATHLON REPORT – 02 MAY 10

Swim 1100m open water lake swim

Bike course 36 km, rolling roads with a couple of nice climbs!

Run course 10km out and back on rolling off-road gravel tracks.

RESULTS FROM THE 339 FINISHERS

Position								swim	bike	run	tot time	
11	157	Shaun	Green	Andover Tri Club	M40	M	40:00.0	18:05.3	00:56:59.30	00:41:12.20	01:56:16.85	2
323	190	Martin	Hudson	Andover Triathlon	M50	M	50:00.0	48:20.8	01:18:37.50	00:51:59.00	02:58:57.30	19

Full results: http://www.tri247.com/results_8240.html

The weather report wasn't looking good for Sunday with a breeze, rain showers and low temperatures forecast, so I wasn't looking forward to dipping my toe into a lake at 7.30am! It was quite cold and miserable as I left home on Salisbury Plain, but I was optimistic it would be better in the New Forest. Having braved Lulworth Cove in the week, I guessed the lake would be a little warmer, and thankfully it was; water temperature was announced as 13 degrees C or so, which was ok with a wetsuit and my new neoprene 'gimp hat'.

I set off steadily in the swim, not wanting to blow up this early in the year, so let the fish-like people slip away, preferring clear water off the side of the pack. I picked up a little on the return leg of the swim, found a rhythm and moved up a few places. I'm not a big fan of the transition area at Ellingham Lake, it hasn't improved much since I did the Half Ironman race here a few years back, and remains very gritty. I think they either need more matting or to try to grow some grass! Not that I could feel the stones, as my feet were blocks of ice; I didn't feel them again until late in the run.

The bike started flat for the first km then kicked up a long drag. I was already glad I'd taken time to put a gillet on, as the cool breeze was blowing and the sun was struggling with the clouds. Having done a sprint tri on the previous Wednesday, and a tough bike road race on the Friday, I wasn't sure my legs were recovered for this rolling route, but as I passed a couple of skinny blokes, all aero kitted up, I felt I was moving ok. I got going well across the top section over Godshill, and maintained a good pace to T2, having moved up to around 6th place overall, posting the 5th fastest bike of the day. I was sent the wrong way through transition by the marshall, so did a circuit through with my bike, before finally getting out on the run. It's one of those

things, you know it's the wrong, but if you are directed the wrong way or misunderstand the directions given, you just have to crack on. In honesty, with the dreadful run I was about to have, it made no difference.

I'd forgotten how tough it is running in the New Forest! My race shoes were barely adequate for the gravel surfaces, but couldn't feel my feet anyway, and I just couldn't cope with the rises, of which there were many. I held on to the turnaround point, but the return leg was a suffer-fest as another athlete crept pass. I think the efforts of the week had caught up with me, and couldn't complain as this was all hard training rather than a target race. So in all, happy to have hung on for 11th place, 2nd Vet 40-49 age group.

This is a well run event, but with the split locations for transition and the finish/presentation area (at Moyles Court School) the logistics are not great. If you have someone there in support, it is a good idea for them to have warm clothing and your shower kit at the finish, especially on a chilly day. It is a challenging course, and the early time of year means the weather may be hit and miss, particularly for open water swimming. However, as a step up towards a standard distance (Olympic) race, it is a good event.