

Yes, hot from the Ironman UK 70.3 to the hottest day of the year and the Shropshire triathlon. Far from resting on my laurels or for that matter just resting, a week after Wimbleball, I too was at Ellesmere in northwest Shropshire for the Olympic distance triathlon.

Swim – 0:28:15, 256th overall

The swim route was similar to that of Wimbleball in that it was fairly easy to follow. All you had to do was make sure the orange buoys were on your left as you passed them. Unlike Wimbleball though, no real mêlée as such at the start; if anything quite civilised. My hopes of drafting were also dashed as for most of the swim I was on my own. The few swimmers near me weren't quite close enough for me to make use of them, though I was encouraged that they weren't really getting away from me. But it did mean I really had to get round in my own steam; most unfair! The only exception was near the end when I did catch up with the back end of the swimmers from the previous wave; the ladies, and this would be a familiar theme for the day.

T1 – 0:01:50

This included a very short run from the lakeside to transition. So short in fact it hardly gave you time to get what wetsuit off. I did have a bit of problem getting the bottom half of the wetsuit off, but generally the bike gear went on without any problems.

Bike – 1:11:48, 208th overall

There was a hill within a mile of leaving transition. However despite the legs still waiting for blood to flow to them after the swim, I managed to get up it without too much problem, even overtaking someone in the process! I reckon though Wimbleball must have hardened me, as the subsequent hills seemed equally lightweight. If anything, at times the course seemed just mildly undulating and it felt more like a cycle time trail rather than the bike section of a triathlon. I certainly was managing to overtake quite a few people, though again most of them were ladies from the previous wave, rather than the men age groupers from my own wave, but still encouraging and in some ways erm, 'quite welcoming views', never the less. However, it was hot and I did quaff both my bottles of isotonic drink before finishing the course, which is rare for me. I also did begin to tire near the end.

T2 – 0:1:16

Not much to say on this. Everything went as planned, though I did have a little bit of pins and needles in my feet, but that soon passed.

Run – 0:51:49, 368th overall

Where the bike course seemed mildly undulating, the run was most definitely undulating with some steep hilly bits as well. I started off well seeing Nikki ahead of me in the first few kilometres, but after that the kilometre markers did seem to take longer to appear. I'm sure they were really mile markers! As well as being hot, the only drinks available on the run course were water, so I was pleased I had taken a lot of fluid of the isotonic variety on the bike. For the second half of the race I was slowing closing in on a rather young and slender lady runner; well she did look nice from the rear! But it wasn't until the final kilometre, which was predominantly downhill to the finish that I throw out the 'ladies before gentleman' policy and passed her; this despite the fact that my left shoe started falling to bits. Yes, a bit of déjà vu here, but they were an old pair of shoes that were on their last legs anyway, so it wasn't quite the shock as it was in Liechtenstein where I was using relatively new shoes.

Overall – 2:35:17

Despite being a BTF member, I have no idea whether I qualified for the world champs, since to be in a position to qualify; you must first register your intent with the BTF. I hadn't and probably just as well as my overall time placed me 38th out of 48 in my age group. I was also 242nd of the 368 finishers from all waves and 200th male. Anyway, Shaun is in the same age group as me, and I wouldn't want to make his life harder by him having to compete against me! J

Post Race

As part of the entry, after the race there was a food tent for the competitors. The food on offer included freshly made sandwiches, crisps and home made cakes that would have sat proudly on any WI stall for sure, and were certainly better offerings than at Winbledall the week earlier!