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Shires Triers is a BTA affiliated Triathlon Club based around the North West Hertfordshire area and attracts members from Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire. The aim of our club is to offer support, both sporting and social, for budding and practising triathletes.

We are always looking for new members to join our friendly team, and whatever your ability you will be sure of a warm welcome. We have a wide range of experience throughout the club, so if you are new to the sport and are looking for information or guidance on the various disciplines, this Welcome Pack holds basic "get you going" equipment and training information for novices or those just starting out, and contact numbers for members.

The benefits of joining a club apart from the chance of training with like minded individuals are the following: For your £15 Shires Triers membership fee you receive a £10 discount on British Triathlon Association (BTA) membership. BTA membership which we strongly recommend, grants you a free copy of the BTA handbook which includes an annual calendar of events, a free bi-monthly copy of TRInews, the BTA's newsletter, public liability insurance (£5million limit) and discounted entry fees to all BTA sanctioned race events and many other benefits, see their website [www.britishtriathlon.org](http://www.britishtriathlon.org).

Shires Triers membership will get you discount on kit from our various sporting partners and group discount on the some of technical training courses we attend. Our club holds a wide range of social events throughout the year ranging from an informal pub meeting once a month to chew the fat and discuss recent events, to fund raising quizzes, summer BBQ and of course our now legendary Xmas party.

To get you under way you are cordially invited to join in our Monday night swim sessions on a "see how you like it" type deal. These sessions are held in conjunction with Berkhamsted Swim Club and as such have first class coaches and training sessions available. We give all prospective members three weeks to sample these sessions. If you would like to swim on a regular basis with us then a term payment can be made payable to Berkhamsted Swim Club (they will give you details on costs). Their cost includes free swimming in Public sessions so offers great value. If you would like to do your swimming training by yourself no problem, you are still more than welcome to join us at Shires Triers.

WELCOME PACK

swim ● cycle ● run



# triathlon basics

Triathlon is the fastest growing multi discipline sport in the world. It represents both a physical and mental challenge and involves the whole body working as a unit. Triathlon also offers a wide range of distance challenges from Sprints to Ironman. The official ITU (International Triathlon Union) distances are as follow:

**SUPERSPRINT:** 400m swim, 10km cycle, 3km run

**SPRINT:** 750m swim, 20km cycle, 5km run

**OLYMPIC:** 1500m swim, 40km cycle, 10km run

**HALF IRONMAN:** 1900m swim, 90km cycle, 21.1km run

**IRONMAN:** 3800m swim, 180km cycle, 42.2km run

If you are new to the sport we would recommend that once you feel confident enough to compete that you should do a couple of Sprint events in your first year. These will give you feel for transitions, where you move from one discipline to the next, and the transfer of muscle groups from swimming to cycling and cycling to swimming.

We have in the Competition Section outlined a novice race schedule of races we recommend for new members these are all based around Sprint or Supersprint distances. Most of these are swimming pool based but we have included the odd open water sprint as again these offer the chance to try swimming in a wetsuit.

If after you have finished your first season and feel like moving up in distance then the Competition Section has a full list of recommended races with descriptions of what to expect, along with the official club championship series (see below). As a club we offer a wide range of support for novices and always will have someone on hand to answer questions and be there for your first event where possible.

The triathlon season tends to kick off in April/May and draws to a close September/October but outside these dates there are other events to keep you occupied.

The race calendar is normally published in December/January and published in 220 Magazine or posted on the BTA website, so you can plan your season accordingly and get your race entries off nice and early.

## Shires Triers Club Championship

Our new format to find the overall Club Champion for 2004. The competition will allow you to pick your three best results from a series of races throughout the year, over a variety of distances.

**Scoring :** simply take your result in one of the Series races and compare it to your age group winner's time. The percentage you achieve is the number of points. At the end of the season add your three best results, highest score is the winner.

2004 Series Races : Sprint: Duston ([www.justracinguk.com](http://www.justracinguk.com)), May 9.

Sprint: Cotswold, Sep (TBA). Olympic: Windsor ([www.humanrace.co.uk](http://www.humanrace.co.uk)), June 13

Olympic: Bournemouth ([www.conceptsport.co.uk](http://www.conceptsport.co.uk)), Jul 6. Olympic: Milton Keynes

([www.big-cow.com](http://www.big-cow.com)), Jul 25

PLUS any Long Distance event (ie: Half Ironman or longer) - maximum of two races

welcome pack

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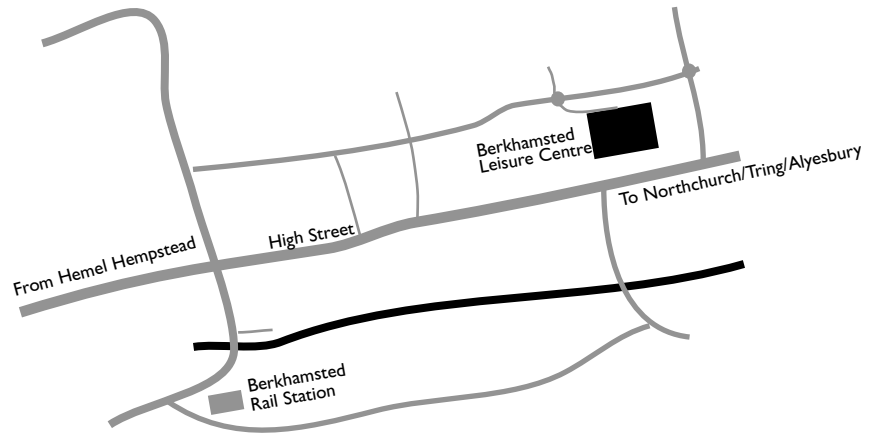
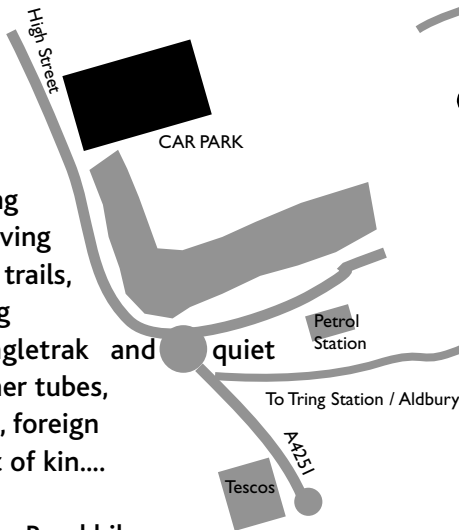
# berkhamsted

# tring

Sunday Cycle rides start from the car park shown.

During the winter on Mountain Bikes lasting between 2-3hrs involving a mixture of wooded trails, muddy fields, blinding descents, rooty singletrak and roads. Bring spare inner tubes, drink, food, (passport, foreign currency, inform next of kin.... just kidding)

During the summer on Road bikes  
The Length depends on how everyone is feeling!

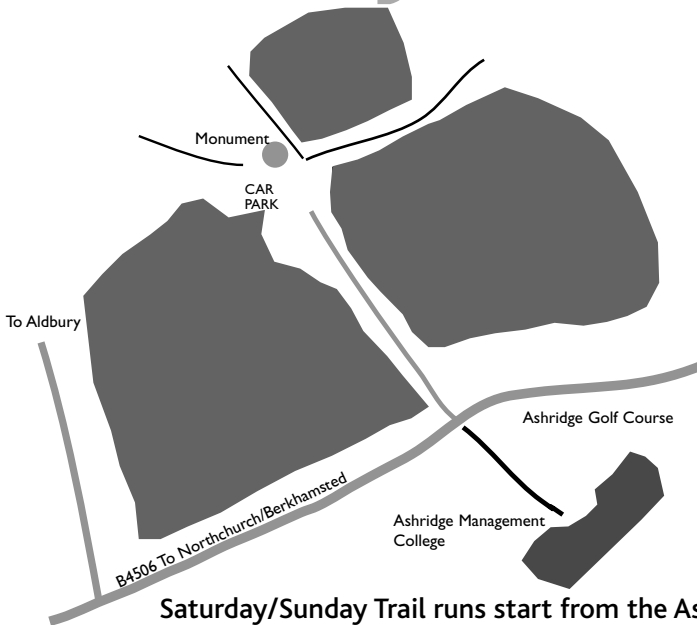


## BERKHAMSTED LEISURE CENTRE

Address: Lagley Meadow, Douglas Gardens,  
Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 3QQ  
Tel: 01442 228123

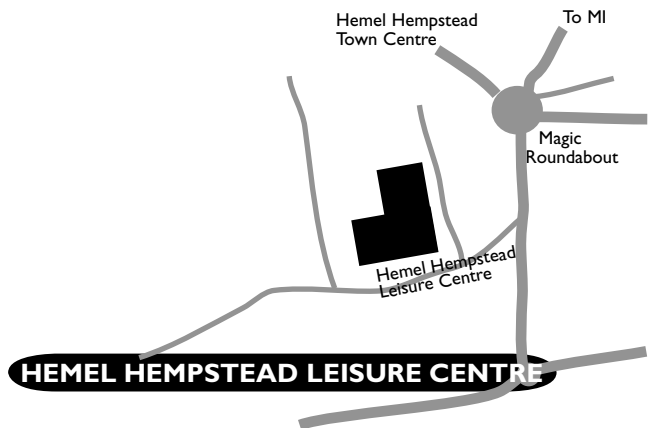
Berkhamsted swim times are as follow:  
Monday evening 7.00pm - 8.00pm.  
Saturday morning 8.00pm - 9.00pm.  
Two lanes are available during general public sessions 12 noon to 1pm every weekday these are little used so are great for extra training sessions ( though you may need to persuade people doing breaststroke in the fast lane to move into the slow lane!)

# ashridge



Saturday/Sunday Trail runs start from the Ashridge monument carpark. Between 10 - 12km it lasts 54 - 70 mins depending how good you are feeling, excellent off road course, plenty of mud and hills.

# hemel hempstead



## HEMEL HEMPSTEAD LEISURE CENTRE

Address: Park Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 1JS  
Tel: 01442 228188

Hemel swim times are as follow:  
Monday morning 6am to 7am  
Thursday evening 8.30pm 9.30pm  
Friday morning 6.30am to 7.30am  
Sunday morning 8am to 9am  
Sunday evening 7pm to 8pm

# swim • cycle • run where



# swimming when

Swimming is the one element of Triathlon that most newcomers worry about (unless of course they come for a swimming background), don't worry we have all struggled to complete just one length of front crawl without feeling that our lungs will burst and our arms will drop off. There is a reason for this, water is a 100 times denser than air and is therefore far more difficult to move through easily. Swimming perhaps more than the other two is the most technical of the 3 disciplines. It takes perhaps 3 months with coaching and advice before you start swim efficiently and gracefully and after that you still are always learning.

So if you feel your swimming is not up to scratch don't worry we have all been there and it just takes time and practice. For our swimming training there are a number of options, the most popular being the Club swimming night Monday at 7pm at Berkhamsted Leisure Centre Swimming Pool. This involves an hours worth of training with our swimming partners the Berkhamsted Swimming Club.

If you are a highly motivated swimmer and are looking for a more competition orientated swim club then HHSC (Hemel Hempstead Swimming Club) have a masters group with times shown below.

The other great fear for newcomers to the sport is the idea of an open water swim, so called because it takes place outside (normally a lake, river or the sea). Again don't worry you can compete in triathlons without ever doing an open water swim.

In fact we would advise people new to the sport to compete in pool based sprint triathlons, (see the Competition Section for details).

Whilst you way up the choices here below are the major swim times.

## SWIM TIMES

<b>Monday -</b>	6am to 7am Hemel Sports Centre Pool (HHSC) <b>7pm to 8pm Berkhamsted Sports Centre (BSC)</b>
<b>Wednesday evening -</b>	8.00pm 9.00pm Hemel Sports Centre Pool (HHSC)
<b>Thursday evening -</b>	8.30pm 9.30pm Hemel Sports Centre Pool (HHSC)
<b>Friday -</b>	6.30am to 7.30am Hemel Sports Centre Pool (HHSC) <b>7.45pm to 9pm Berkhamsted Sports Centre (BSC)</b>
<b>Saturday -</b>	<b>8am to 9am Berkhamsted Sports Centre Pool (BSC)</b> 8am to 9am Open water swim at the "Blue Lagoon"
<b>Sunday -</b>	8am to 9am Hemel Sports Centre Pool (HHSC) <b>5.30 to 7pm Berkhamsted Sports Centre Pool (BSC)</b> 7pm to 8pm Hemel Sports Centre Pool (HHSC)

Very popular with triathletes from many triathlon clubs and an excellent way to practice those early morning mass swim starts. Best to come along (or follow) with the group as it is in the middle of nowhere (well somewhere behind Hitchin)

welcome pack

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# swimming

## EQUIPMENT

A pair of swimming trunks or for the ladies a one piece suit. Or you could plump for a purpose made triathlon suit, these can be one piece or two piece depending on your preference, they are made from a highly technical fabric and are obviously useful in the transitions, a range of Club gear has been designed and a list of items compiled so contact Paul (Yoda) Gascoyne (pauldesg@waitrose.com 01442 865619) for details.

A **Wetsuit**, this can be an expensive purchase and should only be considered if you are going to compete in open water events (or feel the cold in the pool). You can however rent a wetsuit for some of the bigger events and this gives you the opportunity to "Try before you Buy", it normally costs about £50 and a deposit. If you feel confident and want to buy your own, the best time is at the end of the racing season when most of the Tri specialist shops want to dispose of there stock before the new styles and colours come out for the following year. There are many manufacturers the popular ones being Aquaman, Orca, Snugg, Quintana Roo and Ironman, all have a range of suits at different price brackets but make sure you try a couple of different makes on and ensure the fit is correct and chat to the other club members who may let you try their suits on.

For training: A Pull Buoy, this slips between your legs (easy tiger) so you can concentrate on your stroke (again, easy tiger). Hand paddles, these come in a variety of designs and sizes and are used to improve your hand and arms position and pull through the water and build strength. Kick Boards and Mini Foot Fins, again are oft utilised training aids. For further details on where to buy and their use chat to the other members.

**TRAINING:** As a club we are also looking to have TI (Total Immersion, a popular way of swimming for Triathletes) coaching sessions throughout the year, see Mark Hanson for details.

**OPEN WATER TRAINING:** As a club we are also join with many other triathletes for open water swim training at "The Blue Lagoon" (neither Blue nor a Lagoon!) which is tucked behind Hitchen but chat to other members who will tell you how to get there or even give you a lift. This is a great session with a 900m loop in the old quarry clean water and lots of fellow athletes to swim with. Saturday mornings 6.30am to 9.00am.

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# cycling

Cycling is another surprisingly technical discipline that takes a while to master. Those from a cycling background will have an advantage as "cycling legs" take a while to acquire.

## EQUIPMENT:

Bikes, ahh the mystery of Triathlon bikes, likely to be the most expensive bit of kit you will purchase and the one where everyone has a different opinion. Exotic space age materials, (Carbon Fibre, Titanium, Aluminium or Steel?) or how about compact versus standard frames or trick monocoques, double or triple butted, or oval aerotubes, 650c or 700c wheels, a complex and seemingly confusing world.

The best piece of advice is this, the correct fit of the bike is far more important than the latest carbon fibre forks, wheels, chains or pedals. Many of the top professional triathletes complete the cycle leg on standard road bikes, others use specialist triathlon bikes with specific triathlon geometry (designed to save your legs for the run leg). For those starting out I would suggest that a good fitting road bike is fine. Clip on triathlon bars that place you in the optimum aero position can be affixed to standard drop handlebars so you can use the bike for both training and competition.

**Makes and styles:** As a general rule, the bigger the manufacturer the better the value for money you will get. The biggest bike manufacturer in the world are **GIANT** they also make the frames for some of the really expensive boutique bikes. You see a huge amount of **GIANT TCR's** and **OCR's** at triathlons for one good reason. For your money you get a Mike Burrows, (he designed Chris Boardman's world record breaking bike) compact frame, carbon aero forks and the worlds best carbon aero seatpost. The other big manufacturers are **Trek**, who make a great range of bikes and **Cannondale**, who also have a hugely popular range, including some new for 2002 multisport specific bikes. Most of these bigger manufacturers now have women specific geometry ranges. Away from the biggy's are the smaller custom manufacturer's bikes, **Softride**, **Kestrel**, **Lightspeed**, **Cervelo**, Principia, **Quintana Roo** and **Griffen**. UK based **Sigma** make excellent bikes (if you are very lucky you can stroke Paul Hardys new toy) and companies like **Tri and Run** offer custom builds at excellent prices, you pay your money and makes your choice.

If you have any cash left over, a mountain bike is a great tool for winter training as the extra weight makes you work harder and getting nice and muddy is great fun

**Sizing**, as mentioned previously bike fit is imperative, many of the specialist bike shops have a fitting service, mention that you will be using the bike for triathlons as this generally involves the use of a steeper (77°) seat tube.

If you are unsure that triathlon is for you, second hand road bikes make sense and are readily available in the small advert sections of the bike magazines.

**Economic Tip:** If you wait for the end of the race season you may be able to pick up a second hand bargain or new bikes at knock down prices, please chat to the other members for advice.

Bike shoes, you may have noticed that cyclist seem to clip their feet to the pedals, this is not because they love their bikes and cannot bear to be separated, but because you are using the up stroke of your pedal action as well as the down stroke which makes your cycling 50% more efficient (don't panic we all fall over to begin with).

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# cycling

There are specific triathlon cycle shoes with a wide opening a big heel loop and minimal velcro fixing straps, names to look for are **Carnac, Sidi, Shimano** and **Time**. Again chat to the members for further insights and confusing and completely conflicting bike information, and wear a cycle helmet at all times (maybe not on the turbo, see below).

**For training:** A Turbo trainer enables you to train without moving or leaving the house great for grotty winter days! Basically it consists of a clamp and flywheel you fit your bike to it and pedal away without going anywhere (hold on this sounds like my last bike ride!). Again there are a huge range of turbo trainers on the market ranging from £50 - £2,000 phew!

Basic models offer simple resistance mechanisms, whilst the more expensive offer interactive races on giant screens against computer generated riders (like Paul H & Musty) with 3-d graphs showing your pedal cadence, heartrate and speed. Have I mentioned that you pays your money and makes your choice.

## TRAINING:

During the summer the Hemel Hempstead Cycle Club hold there infamous 10 mile time trials along the Leighton Buzzard Road, (just you and your bike against the clock), fantastic for checking your fitness and cycling progress. For other training opportunities it is always nice to go out in a group and most weekends the club has a ride organised normally leaving from Tring carpark on Sunday mornings.

A few of us also latch onto the Hemel Hempstead Cycle Club Sunday rides which leave Hemel Hempstead BR Station at 9.00am and returns some 4hours later.

During the winter months mountain biking tends to be the popular choice and again rides are organised at the weekend.

One of our club sponsors **MOUNTAIN MANIA** are always useful for friendly helpful advice and can point you in the right direction with regard to equipment and bike servicing.

## RECOMMENDED RETAILERS

### MOUNTAIN MANIA

10 Miswell lane, Tring, Herts HP23 4BX Tel: 01442 822458

Club friend Andy, an experienced cyclist and the shop has lovely bikes both road and mountain to look at, lots of great clothing and the odd demo bike you can try out.

### SHORTER ROCHFORD CYCLES

27 Barnet Road, Potters Bar, Berkshire Tel: 01707 662 332

Run by a very helpful guy Darren, an experienced time trialler and cycle guru, he knows his stuff and can help you with bike position and set up.

The shop has lots of lovely bikes a good range of clothing and "bike porn" (carbon fibre/titanium accessories) to look at. Plus new for 2003/2004 season their very own Carbon/Aluminium/Carbon Time Trial frames which are both beautiful to look at and very reasonable at approx £600 - £1,100 for frame and forks. Mention that you are a member of Shires Triers and you never know Darren may give you an even better price.

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# running

Good news, running equipment is not that expensive, the main element being you. However good quality properly fitting footwear is very important. I would recommend that you pop along to a sports shop that has a "Foot Bio-Scan" facility (Sweat Shop in Milton Keynes have one) even if you do not buy your shoes from them.

The foot scan consists of you running across a pressure sensitive mat that shows whether you under pronate or over pronate and other medical sounding things we do with our feet without realising it. You can then buy trainers that suit your style of running, easy hey.

I would also recommend that you have three pairs of trainers, one for competition, one for training and one for running off road. Replacing running shoes every year makes sense, as like many things in life they do wear out (what was I saying about running being cheap?). Recommended makes are: **Asics, Adidas, Saucony, Mizuno** and **New Balance**. Elastic laces, and lace locks make transitions nice and easy, as do pull loops on the heel of the shoe.

**Bits:** In addition to the above the following are very useful.

**Heart rate monitor:** you will find that as soon as you start training seriously that this is the essential piece of kit, as without fail, all the training guides make mention of the different zones that your heart will reach whilst you are training. It may seem complicated and indeed it is, but resting heart rates, maximum heart rate, percentages of working heart rate etc are the basis of all training schedules. **Polar** are the worlds leading heart rate monitor manufacturers, and make an excellent range from the very simple, to monitors that are basically a coach on your wrist (normally a physical impossibility) with the information downloadable to your computer. Features to look for are average heart rate, training zones and interval training. To ease your choice buy the **Polar S210** it has everything you will ever need short of the computer link up.

**Training Log:** Now you have all the kit, and thanks to the Heart rate monitor loads of information about your training, this is where you can write it all down and see how you are progressing or not as the case may be.

## TRAINING:

Our very own athletics coach Mike Dixon leads a track session every tuesday night throughout the year with an excellent hour long session. This is a great way to get your speed work done with a big group of mainly runners but a wide range of abilities. This takes place at Watford Leisure Centre Athletics stadium, talk to Mike or Mark Hanson for further details.

We also have a long club run on Saturday mornings in Ashridge by the monument, cross country normally an hour in length across mixed terrain.

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# retail therapy



**Retailers:** Here is a list of Triathlon specialists, bike shops, shoe shops and websites in no particular order or preference.

**BIKE & RUN** 125 High Road, East Finchley, London N2 8AG Tel: 020 8815 1845

**SIGMA SPORT** 15 High Street Kingston Surrey KT1 4DA Tel: 020 8943 4443

**MOUNTAIN MANIA** 10 Miswell lane, Tring, Herts HP23 4BX Tel: 01442 822458

Club friend Andy, an experienced cyclist and the shop has lovely bikes both road and mountain to look at, lots of great clothing and the odd demo bike you can try out.

**LETCHEWORTH TRISPORTS** 11/12 The Wynd, Letchworth, Herts SG6 3EL

Tel: 01462 683615

**BERKHAMSTED SPORTS** High Street, Berkhamsted. Run by club member Nick who will cheerfully help you out with any enquiries and give you discount as well, top man.

**ON THE RUN** 10 How Wood, Park Street. St. Albans, Herts. Tel: 01727 875354

New shop with great range of running shoes and apparel, knowledgeable staff as well.

**SHORTER ROCHFORD CYCLES** 27 Barnet Road, Potters Bar, Berkshire Tel: 01707 662332

Very helpful guy Darren, an experienced time trialler and cycle guru and the shop has lots of lovely bikes and "bike porn" (carbon fibre accessories) to look at.

**TRI AND RUN** 53 New North Road, Hainault, Essex IG6 2UE Tel: 020 8500 4841

Very helpful and friendly guys, Greg and Kevin happy to give new and experienced athletes good advice. they also do a great value "Starter Triathlon Kit" which includes Bike, bike helmet and shoes, Wetsuit, Tri suit or separates and running shoes for £1,000. They can measure you for a bike £30 refundable if you buy a bike from them. They attend lots of triathlons with their trade stand and can bring bits along if you need them, just give them a ring. Also just up the road from their shop is a groovy "bike palace" with all sorts of exotic bikes and bike bits over which to salivate.

**WEBSITES:** Great sources for equipment and training information.

[www.totalfitnessbath.com](http://www.totalfitnessbath.com), [www.slowtwitch.com](http://www.slowtwitch.com), [www.gbicycles.co.uk](http://www.gbicycles.co.uk)

[www.sigmasport.co.uk](http://www.sigmasport.co.uk), [www.probikekit.com](http://www.probikekit.com), [www.swimproducts.co.uk](http://www.swimproducts.co.uk),

[www.220magazine.com](http://www.220magazine.com), [www.cyclelogic.co.uk](http://www.cyclelogic.co.uk), [www.triandrunk.com](http://www.triandrunk.com), [www.heartratemonitor.co.uk](http://www.heartratemonitor.co.uk), [www.britishtriathlon.co.uk](http://www.britishtriathlon.co.uk), [www.ontherun.co.uk](http://www.ontherun.co.uk)

## Recommended Reading Material:

Here is a short list of some excellent publications on the black arts of Triathlon training etc, these will likely contain completely contradictory information to all of the info in the welcome pack, but are very good despite this seemingly massive flaw.

**The Complete Guide to Endurance Training** by John Ackland. Published by A & C Black £14.99 ISBN 0-7136-5017-6 A truly awesome book full of equations, formulas and training schedules that will make you the ultimate athlete, (sigh) if only it was that easy.

**The Improvers Triathlon Guide** by Ken Maclaren. Published by KinEli Publishing £20.00 [www.kineli.co.nz](http://www.kineli.co.nz) For those who want to race faster. Comes with a money back, "Go faster Guarantee!".

**Magazines:** Running Fitness, 220 Triathlon, Cycling Plus, Runners World

Well that's your lot for now, further more detailed information will be available on our soon to be launched website. If you are new to triathlons it's a great idea to tag along to one of the events and see what it is all about, your support will be gratefully received. In the meantime please feel free to ask the members any questions you may have, especially the experienced boys, Paul Hardy, Mustafa, Maurice and Tony, they should know what they are talking about unlike me, who just makes it all up, doh.

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# competition

So you've got the bug, done the training, brought the gear. Here is where you can put it into practice in the sporting arena against like minded athletes.

If you are just starting out and this is your first season we would recommend the following races, you can of course do any race you fancy but we have all competed at these races and think they suit novice triathletes.

Mark Hanson is our competition secretary so if you have any questions give him a call 078762 40009 or email: [mark.hanson@merlincd.com](mailto:mark.hanson@merlincd.com)

## **16th May/27th June/11th July Eton Sprint Triathlon:**

Organised by Human Race who always run a good event. This race series is based at Dorney Lake near Windsor, basically Eton schools boating shed (£14million). This is an open water 400m swim, 20k flat bike on a closed road course and a 2 lap flat 5k run.

Great for spectators as they can see the whole course from the viewing gallery.

Good for your first taste of open water swimming.

[www.humanrace.co.uk](http://www.humanrace.co.uk) for details

## **7th August Team Sprint Triathlon Championships:**

The best race of last year by far. We entered two teams of four who swim 400m open water, cycle 20k and run 5k in turn, in a relay style. After over 2 hours of racing it was just 10 seconds at the end that separated them. We intend to enter three teams this year so let us know if you are interested and we will sort out the rest.

call mark 078762 40009 or [mark.hanson@merlincd.com](mailto:mark.hanson@merlincd.com)

## **12th September National Sprint Triathlon Championships:**

Held at the Cotswold Water Park with a fast flat course normally blessed with great weather. This our adopted club race, each year the club champion is crowned at this race, Musti our current Club champion may have his work cut out this year with Mark, Gerry and the two Paul hot on his tail. The women members will battle it out to the bitter end.

You have to be in it to win it, though I may be a little tired as the Vitruvian (half ironman distance is the day before).

call mark 078762 40009 or [mark.hanson@merlincd.com](mailto:mark.hanson@merlincd.com)

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Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Mobile:

E.mail:

Date:

British Triathlon Association membership No:

(If applicable)

Subscription Levels: £15.00 per year

I enclose a cheque For £

make payable to Shire's Triers Triathlon Club

I hereby agree to read and fully comply with the Club's constitution. I also accept that I train and race at my own risk and will not hold the club liable for any loss or damage incurred as a result of racing or training with or for the Club.

Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to the Membership Secretary:

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