

Tri2O Newsletter – Dec 2020



Chairman's Update	2
Club History.....	4
Mont Tremblant IM 70.3 World Champs.....	6
Henderson Personality of the Year Award Winners	9
Martin's Triathlon Journey.....	11
Team GB – An Age-grouper's Experiences.....	13
Pete's Tri2O Journey	16
10 Years of Tri2O Kit.....	17
When I Joined Tri2O.....	20
The Start of the Winter Running Competition.....	21
Tri2O – Where My Triathlon Journey Began	22
Mallorca 70.3 (2014).....	24
We would love to hear from you.....	26

Chairman's Update

Dear Tri2O'ers

A very warm welcome to the Tri2O 10th Anniversary "bumper edition" newsletter, I do hope you enjoy the stories and photos from all contributors. Our wonderful Communications Officer and "Editor in Chief" Sunil Fernandes has been rallying around members both old and new to put together this fascinating "look back" into how your Club has evolved over the last decade with some emotional insights into members' triathlon journeys.

Thank you Sunil for your imagination and determination to get this one past the post and thanks to all who have provided Sunil with content it is very much appreciated.

I would like to take this opportunity to show my appreciation and thanks to all Main Committee and Sub Committee members who are all passionate volunteers giving their time to the Club and it's members.

If you attended the AGM back in November (link to presentation [HERE](#)) you will be aware that despite the year just gone our membership numbers have held steady at approx 200 Tri2O'ers, many of whom are happy to participate as members only, which is great. I would however like to reach out to any of you who are able and willing to get more involved in the Club and would appreciate you getting in touch over the coming months to chat about potential committee roles that may become vacant towards the end of 2021. Feel free to email me at chairman@tri2o.club or give me a call.

We all share the love of swim / bike / run as individual sports or any combination of the three. My training across these sports along with the camaraderie from clubmates has been invaluable to my own physical and mental health, especially throughout 2020 – Thank You Tri2O.

With the end of a very turbulent year nearly behind us and a list of restrictions on what we "cannot" do I felt it perhaps the right time to focus on what we **CAN** and **WILL DO** as a club looking forward from here.....

So from chats with various members over the last 12 months, I have listed below the 'Top 10' mentioned features / benefits of being a member of the Tri2O Triathlon Club.

A Tri2O member will:

1. Be part of a friendly group of like minded individuals
2. Enjoy a low cost membership fee with a pay as you go model for some additional activities
3. Feel part of an inclusive club suitable for all levels of experience
4. Enjoy discussions and banter with members in our private Facebook Group
5. Have access to currently 3 (usually 4) structured, coached swim sessions every week delivered by talented, caring and experienced coaches
6. Celebrate each others successes via newsletter and social media
7. Have an opportunity to feel part of the "orange army" in our stand out kit colours

8. Not feel intimidated asking any questions about swim, bike, run or where to get the best cake!
9. Improve their technique and running times with weekly coach-led Run Club group sessions
10. Be part of a well oiled team in organising the Reading Triathlon

in 2021, look out for the regular events that we couldn't run in 2020 plus some exciting new initiatives. These include:

- An early season intensive swim training camp
- Katie's ride and the annual Fish 'n Chip ride to Hayling Island
- Organised regular group bike rides of various speeds / abilities
- Summer lake swim followed by a sunset BBQ
- Weekend open water swim followed by brunch
- More virtual run coaching and the return of the weekly Run Club
- Members only single sport or multi sport mini-races

If you can help out with any of the above and want to get involved, or have ideas for a club activity you would like to share please get in touch with any committee member – all their contact details are [HERE](#).

Enjoy your 10th Anniversary Newsletter – it's a cracker!!

I will sign off by wishing you and your families a wonderful festive season and a healthy and prosperous 2021, bring on some racing.....!

Best wishes

Mike Nash
Chairman



Club History

It's Tri 2 Oooooo, not Tri Twenty!

The Club was named after the [Tri2O Swim Centre](#). Many triathletes trained there and they wanted to be part of a club so they asked the Swim centre to set it up.

The Swim Centre name came about as a play on H2O and obviously combines triathlon and water. Many people mistakenly think it is Tri20 (Tri twenty) and don't realise it is Tri2O (with the O being for oxygen rather than zero).



Early history of the club

- Tri2O Triathlon Club was formed in late summer of 2010 at the [Tri2O Swim Centre](#) to cater for the many triathletes using the lake who weren't members of any triathlon club.
- The Club was heavily supported in its formation by Ceri Philpott and Kevin Lewis of My Sporting Times/Tri2O Swim Centre and Clive Alderson and Russ Cox as coaches.
- The Club was formed with the objective of being friendly, open to all abilities and non-cliquey.
- Early club rides involved 3-6 people and 5-10 people were involved in the weekly club swim, but the Club quickly grew with 50 members in the first year. It kept rising and the Club membership is currently around 200.
- The Club's first ever Awards evening and Christmas Party was held at the Griffin in Caversham.
- The Club has used numerous venues for training sessions, including the Tri2O Swim Centre, Bradfield College, Crosfields School, Willink, Caversham Riverside and Reading Central Pool for swimming and Prospect Park and Palmer Part track for running. Bike rides have started from numerous locations in the Reading area and beyond.

- Dozens of people have contributed to the Club as committee members, coaches and volunteers.

Steve Stroud, the first Chairman of the Club, recalls his early memories:

After swimming in the lake, Harper, Mark Gorst nagging Ceri and Dom, “you really should set up a club from here, there must be more than us six that want to train together?”

Early “club” sessions were a swim and if there were enough people (me, Harper, Goochi, Dom, Russ (Coach Cox) we’d go out for a run around the area afterwards.

That progressed into cycles after a swim at the weekends with whoever was about. Clive usually lead the ride – nobody had much clue about group riding and just sat in behind him.

Once it got more organised Russ used to lead the rides. I remember his method, I was riding up front with him one morning as we cycled through Bramley. There were about 4 pairs behind us and I could feel the pace getting quicker and quicker until I said to Russ I was starting to suffer. He said, “drop back and let one of that lot that are nattering away come up then”. His method was to get faster and faster and faster until people trained not socialised. That’s how you get to Hawaii I guess!

Many thanks to Ceri Philpott, Steve Stroud, Dom Dos Remedios, Jennie Jones, Pete Gough, Nick O’Connell for letting me pick their brains to dig into the early days of the Club.



Mont Tremblant IM 70.3 World Champs



by Katie Henderson (*first published Oct 2014*)

My computer was shut down, 'out of office' email turned on and coffee mug washed up! As I thanked my friends at the University of Reading for their kind words of support and encouragement, my life as a full time office worker was being put on hold whilst I travelled to Mont Tremblant, Canada to compete in my first Ironman 70.3 World Championships. Excitement was an understatement.....

I arrived 4 days before the race which gave me enough time to check out parts of the swim, bike and run course. As I was walking through the race village to the lake for a little swim, I suddenly felt so out of place and the magnitude of where I was suddenly hit me! Everyone, bar no one had the best kit, fastest bikes, most aero helmet and expensive shoes and I felt very small. Nick was fab and told me there was nothing to worry about, I had done all the training and I wouldn't be here if I wasn't just as good. I tried to snap myself out of it and told myself that of course they would have the best stuff, it was the World Championships after all! This time last year I had never even contemplated racing the 70.3 distance and now, after only doing two races at this distance, I was in the World Championships. With this in mind, I had nothing to lose, no one knew who I was and I didn't know who my competitors were either and that's exactly how I prefer it to be. Deep breath!

As the sun rose on the morning of 7th September (2014) a wave of excitement and nervous anticipation swept over me. This was the day where the early mornings in the pool and countless laps of the lake, numerous 100 plus mile rides in the saddle and running horrible hill reps would count. This was the day when all the sacrifices I'd made, parties I'd missed, family occasions I hadn't been to and all the cake and chocolate I hadn't eaten would hopefully make the difference. This was the day that was going to matter and I had to be in

the best shape of my life! I had my usual race morning breakfast of porridge and jam, a bagel with peanut butter and a coffee and my made the way to the start.

It was a beautiful morning, the mist just hovering over the lake and as soon as I saw my Pro Bike Fit team mate Callum Hughes I felt a calmer. The male and female elite waves began by fighter jets soaring overhead, which anyone who knows me will know that that is my worst nightmare. Despite that it really set a group precedence for the event and every age group wave after that was started with fireworks, pretty impressive! I couldn't wait to get going!

As I looked around at the rest of my age group, before the start of my race at 8.20am I got that out of place feeling again, everyone looked so professional! By the way some of the girls were vigorously swinging their arms around I was sure they were very good swimmers. Bring it on! It was a running start from the beach, something which I'd never done before, but was really looking forward to. I had no idea whether I was going to run for as long as possible and do several dolphin dives before beginning to swim or try and start swimming as soon as possible. I did the latter and much to my surprise there was only one girl that was up with me after 50m and after another few strokes she had dropped back and I was out in front!

Adrenaline and questions were racing through my mind. Had I started too fast, could I keep this pace up, would I go the right way? After about 600m, I'd started to catch up with the male wave that had started 4 minutes before us and after about 1100m, I was passing some of the male swimmers from the wave in front of them too. Despite this it wasn't my best swim and got quite frustrating at times. I didn't take the most direct line so as to avoid the masses, swimming around everyone instead and therefore never really felt like I got into a rhythm. Eventually, I could see the swim exit and unusually I was glad that it was over, but I was first in my age group out the water.

Woop!! It was such a great feeling, like a dream becoming reality, I was leading the race in the World Championships. Almost as soon as I'd got out the water I was horizontal again, having my wetsuit pulled off by two of the numerous volunteers that are fundamental in making these events as successful and iconic as they are. I ran the 300m to the transition tent along the red carpet, wetsuit over my shoulder and found my kit straight away. I still need to work on my speed in transitions and can definitely improve on the 5+ minutes I spent there, haha oops.....

The bike course was fantastic, half the motorway was closed, (think smooth tarmac roads), albeit some heart stopping moments. There was a lot of drafting; despite being told in the briefing it was not allowed. Someone's bottle popped out directly in front causing me to run it over, someone else hit a wheel of another guy coming off. Narrowly avoiding them I slowed down and let the pack pass so I could ride on my own. This I decided was a much better idea as honestly, if I had a mechanical I knew my race was probably over, (I'm not really known for my skills in bike fixing)! It was a pretty hot day and there was nowhere to hide from the sun and after about 60km-90km I began to slow down as the heat and lack of drink began to kick in. A timer was set on my Garmin to remind me to have a gel every 20 minutes. I also had one bottle of SIS on my bike and planned to replace it at each aid station every 15km. I tend to drink a lot (ahem) and I definitely under estimated how much I needed to drink on the bike. I was relieved when the next aid station came into view and made the last part and the hardest section of the bike a lot easier and the downhill into the transition area was great fun!

It was hard to tell where I was positioned at the end of the bike leg, I knew at least one girl had overtaken me, but thought that was it? Wow, was I really still 2nd after the bike leg in the World Champs! As soon as I started the run, I could feel my quads beginning to cramp. I slowed down and took on as much water as I could and after about 3 miles I was able to pick up the pace again. It was a two lap run course and the final part of each lap was up the cobbled street of Mont Tremblant, the support everywhere was absolutely incredible and definitely kept me going up the really steep hill. I saw Nick after one lap and he said he thought I was in 4th place, whether I was or not, that was the motivation I needed to push the second lap and give it everything, I wasn't coming all this way to finish 4th. I started to overtake people, one girl came with me and we began overtaking people together. Every mile my Garmin would beep letting me know my time for the previous mile and each time she would ask what pace we were going. It was usually about 7min/mile pace, which was quicker than I'd planned, so I was happy! However, she was not pleased, saying it was awful and couldn't believe how slow she was going! With 2 miles to go, I couldn't listen to her negativity anymore and decided to make a break for it, which was the last I saw of her! It took everything I had to get up the hill for the final time and down to the finish line. As I crossed the line it was the most amazing feeling, I had given it my all and if I had come 4th it was ok as I had done my absolute best! The biggest medal I've ever seen was placed over my head and I leant over the barrier, partly from the weight of the medal, but I also thought I may pass out. I heard Nick shouting my name, it was great to have him there supporting (thanks babe) and he said that I had come 3rd!! I couldn't believe it, well I didn't believe it until I had seen official confirmation. The feeling of emotion was overwhelming and I fought back the tears, happy ones of course.

It took a few days to sink in, but there it was;

KATIE HENDERSON GBR

Swim 00:25:09

Bike 02:26:51

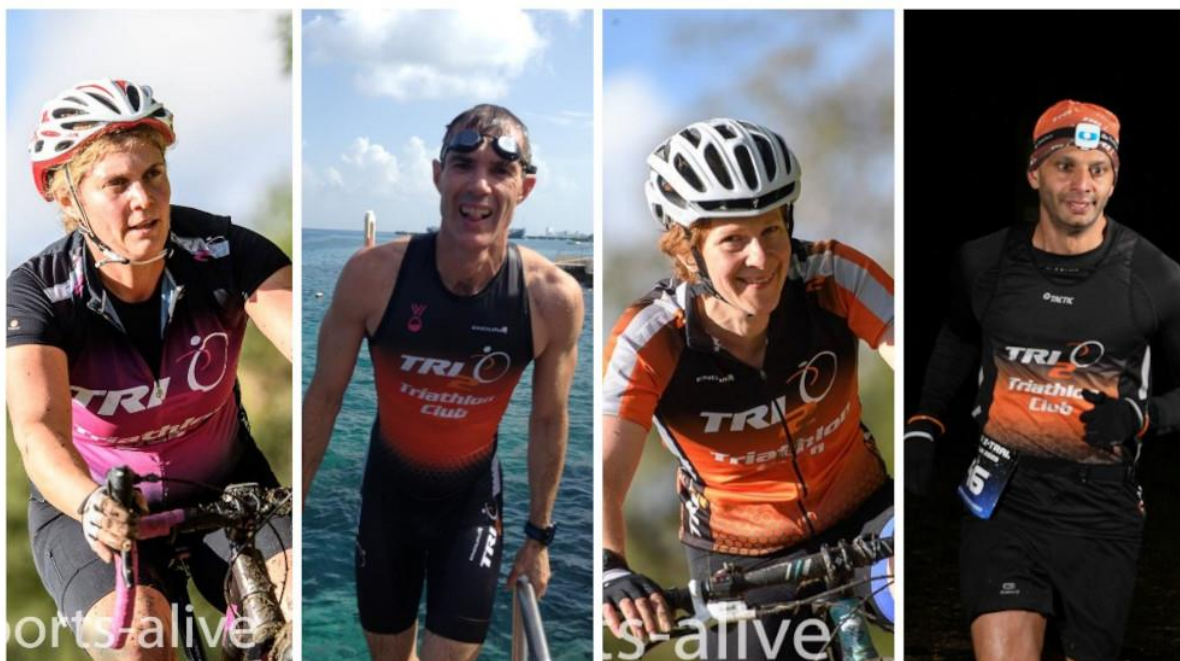
Run 01:32:46

Overall 04:31:21

3rd in age group, 3rd age grouper overall, Fastest swim time and 22nd female overall including the Pro's in the Ironman [70.3 World Championship 2014](#).

This is very cliché, but I want to thank my friends and family who have supported me throughout the year and understood the sacrifices I had to make in order to do what I do, I couldn't have done it without them. My support crew, who come to the races and watch, helps more than they know. My coach Tim Challinor and physio Katy Digby who I feel so lucky to have and Pro Bike Fit who provided me with my Ceepo (bike) and a bike fit, kit and nutrition. I definitely wouldn't have achieved what I have if it wasn't for their professional and friendly help and advice. And finally, the messages I receive before and after my races, I am still overwhelmed and feel extremely lucky to have such supportive people in my life.

Henderson Personality of the Year Award Winners



by Sally Waterman

The Award

The Henderson Personality of the Year award was created in memory of [Katie Henderson](#), a Club member who tragically died in a car accident in June 2015 on her way to compete in Ironman 70.3 Staffordshire. Katie was just 33 years of age. She was one of the first members of Tri2O and, aside from being a superb triathlete and a record-breaking swimmer, she touched the hearts of many with her infectious personality. The tribute to Katie on the Club's website sums up what she meant to her many friends in the Club, concluding with what the award in her memory hopes to inspire others to be – positive and encouraging, yet never patronising.

The Henderson Personality of the Year award has been presented to four Club members – keep reading to see who there are....

2016 Christina Demetriou

Christina quickly became a well-known member of the Club as a bike ride leader. She is encouraging and supportive, especially of female members and was for a while the Women's Captain. Christina went out of her way to welcome new members and to show them local cycle routes. She has competed in both long and short distance triathlons, including several IM races and at Sprint and Middle distance as part of the GB Age Group Team. Christina is a superb organiser and seemingly tireless!

2017 Sean Stewart

Sean is a Level 2 Triathlon Coach and coaches the swim session at Crosfields School. He also led the Thursday run club until COVID-19 intervened. As Head Coach he prepares the swim session plan for the year and spends a lot of time planning the individual sessions which he coaches to ensure that they are varied and suitable for all. He is incredibly

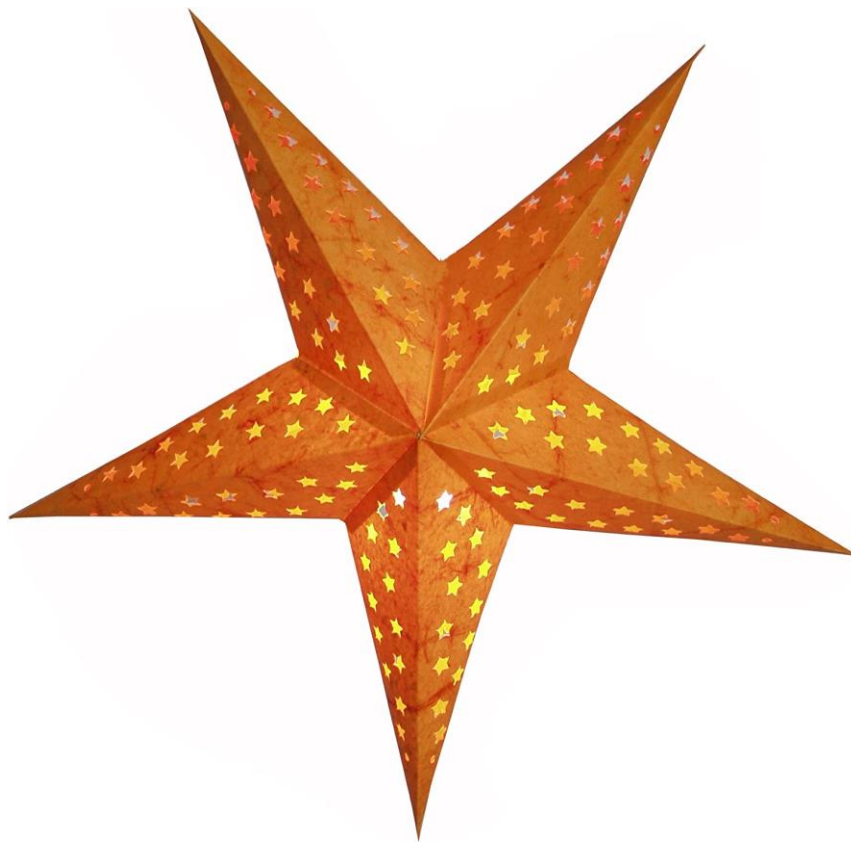
supportive of individual members and has a knack of making each athlete feel that anything is possible. Sean has competed at IM distance and been a member of the GB Age Group team for both duathlon and triathlon since 2012.

2018 Georgia Jackson

Georgia is a Level 2 Diploma Triathlon Coach and one of the Club's regular swim coaches. She has given a lot of time to the Club over many years – she is a previous chairman and has been instrumental in making Reading Triathlon a success since the Club took it over in 2017. She is passionate about helping people of all levels achieve their goals and is a co-organiser of GoTri, which was set-up by the BTF to introduce people to triathlon. Georgia has competed in triathlon as a member of the GB Age Group team, but she currently gets her buzz from swimming in cold open water in skins!

2019 Sunil Fernandes

Sunil is the Club's Communications Officer and the virtual voice behind most of the info@ emails and Facebook posts that members receive. He devotes a lot of time to the Club, attending as many events as possible and producing the fantastic newsletter every 2 months. In addition to persuading members to write articles he tirelessly encourages participation in Club events and enthusiastically welcomes new members. Sunil is always willing to help and is the IT ninja on the committee – he keeps the website up to date and has developed the swim session booking process on TeamApp.



Martin's Triathlon Journey



Photos : *First Olympic distance Windsor 2007 (Left) | 2nd place for Tri2O in the over 50's national relays (Right)*

by Martin Cook

I started triathlons in 2006 at one of the Thames Turbo events held at the Hampton pool. Luckily no photographs are available to evidence me swimming the 432 metres (or my version at the time of swimming front crawl which was a perfect demonstration of straight arm windmilling), cycling 20k and then running 5k in my footy trainers.

The following season I was passing through Oxford and went into a tri shop there to purchase a tri suit. I walked out with a free tri suit to go with the wetsuit that I'd been persuaded to buy. This was the point of no return. An investment had been made.

I then entered a Dorney sprint distance tri. This was prior to both the Kirtons Farm lake being open for swimming and the advent of Tri2O so there was not the limitless advice / dire warnings that there is nowadays on preparing for open water swimming. Consequently I rocked up for the event having only ever swum in a pool and never having worn my wetsuit in the water. I did have the shiny new gear though.

As is the case to this day I'm not that keen on cold water so I did what any sensible person would do in that situation: I stood on the pontoon and felt sorry for all the idiots who were in the water way too early. On hearing that there were 30 seconds until the start I lowered myself into a great position, near the front on the inside. The hooter went while I was wondering why I was breathing so rapidly and then as I tried to start windmilling they all attacked me (seemed that way at the time). It stuck me at the time that the safety crew should not have positioned themselves at the front of the swimmers, where they were unlikely to be

needed, because had they been anywhere near the back, where they would more likely be needed, I could and would have got them to pull me out. I was perfectly capable of swimming 400m front crawl but ended up doing the whole thing breaststroke because I was so traumatised.

After this experience I did some research and signed up for an open water swimming course but even with that it took me a couple of years to heal the mental scars of that first open water experience (not sure that I'm completely over it now).

After that chastening experience I couldn't ever see myself swimming 3.8k but once I moved away from windmilling and got some semblance of technique I did manage to get there. My thoughts on the IM distance events I've done are:

IM UK (twice) – dodgy weather and hills. Dark cold lakes. No restaurants in Bolton. Found out that putting jelly babies in the pocket of your tri suit during the run is not a good idea.

IM France (twice) – heat, long climb on the bike, great support from the locals on the bike course, no shade on the run along the sea front but the joy of spending 4 + hours watching everyone on the beach having fun while you are thinking you might pass out.

IM Austria – lovely lake swim (must be for me to say that), beautiful bike course, nice run passing through the town multiple times. Lovely area for a short break. Free ice cream at the finish.

IM Germany – do this if you like being watched by lots of German drinking lots of beer. Nice section of cobbles if you like extra pain. My other abiding memory from this event was seeing someone put their pointy aero helmet on back to front.

IM Wales – think long and hard before entering. Lovely location but it's going to be a long day / evening. Definitely the best nation in the world though.

Outlaw – did this the first year they ran it. Nice event with camp site next to the lake.

Challenge Henley – it was great to have a local event. Shame it was moved due to the residents absolutely needing to drive their Range Rovers 100 yards to the shops on a Sunday.

Kona – warm water. Lovely. All IM events should be forced to have warm water.

The first few years doing the sport were pretty interesting. I had no idea on how to train effectively and no-one to turn to for advice. I'd always been pretty good on endurance when playing football so survived on that background plus some adhoc swimming sessions. It was only when the Club was formed and coaching became available that I started to train effectively, mostly thanks to the Bradfield swim sessions and then signing up to be coached by Clive. My increasing experience in triathlon and the growth of the Club went hand in hand and I'm sure I wouldn't have ended up in Kona without the coaching support and without the group rides, Mallorca training camps and inspiration and encouragement (or piss taking) of other Club members.

I'm looking forward to the next 10 years with the Club. Hopefully the joints will hold together for me to still be dragging myself around for those years ahead and if you see me in a race looking a bit confused please point me in the right direction.

Team GB – An Age-grouper’s Experiences



by Georgia Jackson (*first published Oct 2017*)

Those who know me in person will know that I sometimes struggle to limit my word count, but I’m going to try really hard to keep this concise. These are my reflections on two very contrasting experiences of Age-Group World Championship competition.

In 2015, after a long year of hard training including injury set-backs, I achieved what I thought (deep down) was the unrealistic dream of qualifying for the World Championships to represent Team GB at Sprint Distance. I was in pretty great form leading up to Chicago, but struggled with motivation and goal-setting for the big race; my whole season had been focussed on qualifying and I had never dared think about (let alone plan for) the actual Worlds.

From the start of the whole process – the endless hype on the closed FB group for the GB Team – through to the feeling of intimidation at being surrounded by Team GB kit at Heathrow Airport on my way out, I had a serious case of Imposter Syndrome. All these lean, fit, world-class athletes, many of whom were Championship recidivists who exuded self-confidence and positivity from every pore, made me feel like I just didn’t belong there, with all of THEM. That’s what it felt like: “them”, not “us”.

There is so much going on in the lead up to the race: course reconnoitres, briefings, registration, team parades, building a bike, photos, flag-waving. This should have spurred me on, made me feel part of something amazing and filled me with excitement, but all it did was make me feel even more inadequate and terrified of being, well, sh*t.

I was so busy worrying about it all, I didn't write a race plan. I always write a race plan. What was I thinking? The biggest race I'd ever done – if ever there was ever a time to write a race plan, it was then!

I lined up in the “holding pens” waiting to get in the water, and there was the first mistake. Freaked out by the whole enormity of the experience, I skulked at the back. If I'd written a plan, that most certainly would not have been my ideal swim start placement. I got stuck, couldn't get past the slower swimmers, and I think I just accepted my lot, which resulted in one of my worst 750m swim split times ever. It looked like mine was the only bike still left in T1. There were a few bike calamities, including tri-bars slipping down throughout (thanks mechanic for the bike check!) and losing my water bottle (30° heat). My transition times were quick though (always my strongest discipline!). The run was abysmal – think gingerbread man melting in no shade burning heat.

I did finish though, and I got my medal, and sat down and was very glad to have my sunglasses not least because it meant that nobody could see my tears. I couldn't find Guy, and the last thing I wanted to do was have age-group group-hug photos. I told everyone it was an amazing experience, but it didn't really feel like that. I felt so disappointed with my 57th out of 83. I did enjoy going to Chicago though.

As a result, I took a year off triathlon. I swam an awful lot, and smashed my swimming goals, and ate a lot of cake and gained a fair bit of buoyancy along the way. The team relays in Nottingham in 2016 rekindled the love though, and I decided I'd give it another go and perhaps try to enjoy it next time. Rotterdam 2017 was more promising – likely to be wet, cold and windy!

The qualification journey to 2017 Words was a bit up and down, but thanks to a good patient winter season of base training, and more importantly the uber-domestique Clare Fox, I squeezed into the AG team with a very bottom-of-the-pile rolldown place from the final qualifier in Redcar.

I was determined to enjoy this one. It's sometimes difficult to explain to family and supporters that if your primary goal is to enjoy a race, it doesn't mean that you don't take it seriously or don't intend to do your absolute best; after all, why are they sacrificing things to enable you to go on a jolly to Rotterdam? So, don't get me wrong, I fully planned to smash this one, but to smash it with a smile on my face.

There was still the hype on the FB group, there were still hundreds of Team GB hoodies everywhere and lean, fit, confident athletes, but I knew that however I'd got there, I deserved to be there, and I wasn't going to let these lean, mean, fighting machines make me feel any less of a racing beast.

I wrote a race plan this time, and smiling featured on it heavily. This time, as I shuffled through the holding pens, I spotted a face next to me that was familiar. Not the person, the expression. It was like looking into a mirror 2 years before. I asked the lady next to me if it was her first time, and I hope that in some small way I helped her have a better race experience than I had back then; we talked about all those feelings she was having that I understood so well. She was smiling by the time we got to the pontoon.

This time, I danced in my wetsuit like a loon, and whooped as we got closer to the start. I turned to the athletes on either side of me and wished them good luck. When my goggles filled up, when I couldn't see where I was going because of the sun, I just dealt with it, and reminded myself of the primary goal. The swim exit photo wasn't even as terrible as they usually are; though I still looked like some sort of beached whale, it was a smiling whale!

The bike course was talked about in advance like no other, and the technicality of it didn't disappoint. Although I struggled to get on a group initially, once I'd found a few others in my age group to ride with, we had a great race and I really enjoyed working together and mainly wheel-sucking.

Despite a weather forecast that had promised rain and misery, the day was clear, cool and sunny. Perfect weather conditions for my pallid complexion! The run wound through the park under the shade of the trees and this was really my opportunity to let go and fly! I don't race with a watch as I prefer to run on feel, and I loved every minute of it. An Aussie supporter shouted "Awesome smile" as I thundered past – mission accomplished! It felt fantastic to run with Christina through the finishing chute, even though I think she enjoyed it a little less than I did. I came very close to a PB on the run split, and am still delighted with my final position of 29th out of 72, comfortably in the top half.

Times:

Chicago 2015: 1:23:52

Rotterdam 2017: 1:23:46

Only 6 seconds in it, but my experience just goes to prove that it is about so much more than the times.

I've learnt so much over the last 2 years, but possibly the biggest lesson for me has been the power of the mind over body. I always "knew" this, but I don't think I'd ever really experienced it until now. It is so important not to lose sight of why we do this sport – stop enjoying it, and what's the point? The most exciting side effect of this is that if you race with positivity and a smile (even if it's a grimace that becomes a smile!), you will produce a better performance. Whilst I can't completely guarantee this, I can guarantee that the performance you do produce will make you happy and proud, if you've enjoyed the process whilst smashing it.

Oh, and that I don't race well in the heat. But I knew that already. Pick your races wisely – there are things you can control, and genetics aren't one of them. You can prepare (think Harriet on the turbo in the bathroom with the shower on preparing for the heat and humidity of Kona), but if you can choose a race that suits your strengths and disposition, then so much the better.

I've failed miserably to keep the word count down, but I hope you've enjoyed reading this (well done for getting this far). If you have any secret longing to go for qualification, then do it – and make sure you enjoy it.

Pete's Tri2O Journey



by Pete Gough

When I was asked to provide a few anecdotes about the Tri2O Club for our 10 year anniversary I thought how hard it can be? Just talk about a few races and events and a few funny stories from over the years. But as I mulled over what to write about it got me thinking about just how important triathlon, and Tri2O, has come to me over the last 10 years and just how much being a member of our Club has been intertwined with my lifestyle.

I joined the Club back in early 2011 with zero sporting background. This was after realising that I didn't really know what the hell I was doing when signing up to my first triathlon (Thame Sprint) and wanting some help to prepare.

What I found was a bunch of fellow nutters who enjoyed the same sorts of crazy challenges that made all my 'regular' friends look at me like I had two heads. Inviting people for an open water swim on a rainy Saturday morning in April or a 40 mile bike ride on a crisp Sunday morning in January found me treated like a normal person rather than someone who had just appeared from mars.

I not only managed to get some great coaching and improve my swim, bike and run times. I found that I have taken much more from being part of our Club.

I've met people from all walks of life and made friends with people from different backgrounds that I really don't think I would have done had I not taken up this sport and joined our Club.

Triathlon and Tri2O have helped me through some major challenging life events including a marriage break up and critical illness. In these times triathlon and the great friends that I have

met through the Club have helped me through and enabled me to come out the other side a better person.

So a big thank you to our incredible Club. I hope that whoever you are that you take a positive out of this Club of ours and enjoy your triathlon journey... whatever it means to you.

10 Years of Tri2O Kit

by Heather Phillips

Our club kit is a strong part of our identity. The eye catching orange and black of the race kit makes us easy to spot out on the course and our bright orange hoodies made it easy to find each other at events.

The Club started life as an offshoot of the Tri2O Swim Centre and we continue to share the distinctive Tri2O logo that appears on all our kit.



Original orange/white trisuit, current orange/black and special edition Hendo pink kit

The kit has been through some design changes; early Club kit was supplied by Endura, similar to the current design only orange on white rather than black. The orange on black design, also designed by Endura, was brought in as an ‘away’ kit as some people (especially some of the women) found the white kit was a bit transparent when wet. Both options were offered to Club members but, as the Club wasn’t getting enough orders of white kit to meet minimum order numbers, it was decided to retire the white kit.

Over the years we've used several kit suppliers; trying to balance quality, range of kit items, price, minimum order size, production time and customer service, to name a few requirements, to ensure Tri2O members get to events looking their best in comfortable high performance kit. We've had kit from Tactic and Champion Systems, who are our current supplier.



Orange hoodies are a popular choice for the Winter Run Competition

Our orange hoodies are printed locally by Blade Printing and are a must have for the Winter Run Series. These come in all sizes and it's been great to see our youngest supporters proudly wearing their hoodies and cheering on the older generation. These have been joined by other winter favourites, beanies and bobble hats, as well as the recent addition of our new summer range of t-shirts and polo-shirts. Not forgetting the popular Tri2O buff (printed by Giraffe), a very versatile piece of kit convertible from neck warmer to hat and now doubling up as an emergency face covering.



A special mention must be made for the Hendo ‘pink’ kit printed in memory of a much loved member of Tri2O, Katie Henderson, who tragically died in 2015. She was known as the “Pink Lady” because it was her favourite colour!



Tri2O triathletes have proudly worn our kit at events all over the world from local parkruns to iron distance events in far flung exotic places.

When I Joined Tri2O...



by Nicky Rumsey

I joined Tri2O because one of my friends who knew I did triathlons was a member. He said “you should come to a swim session, there are worse swimmers than you there”. I tried not to over analyse that!!

Tim Challinor turned up for his first swim session on the same day as me, and we recognised each other from Central Pool, so we got in the same lane, along with Pete Gough. It was a ladder swim, and the time of day and the pace of that session left me totally exhausted, but I was hooked, although I did demote myself 2 lanes the following week!

At that time, Bradfield was the only swim session and you paid £30 for a 6 week course, irrespective of whether you used them or not. We all started in the deep end, and there were 3 coaches at the session (the coaches then were Clive, Russ, Callum and Dom). Every 6 weeks we had a 1k time trial (that is one thing I don’t miss!)

What I loved about the Club was how friendly and inclusive it was. There were some incredible athletes, but all were interested in everyone and didn’t make anyone feel less of an athlete. The chat in the changing rooms was great.

Once I was a member it was great to turn up to events and see other members from the Club, it really made the whole triathlon experience more fun.

I have made loads of really great friends in the Club, and even though it has more than quadrupled in size, I think we have still kept the same friendly ethos. It’s great to find people to train with too – much more motivating.

I have been on the committee since the year I joined – social secretary, communications officer and now membership secretary.

I would encourage everyone to take part in the club events....you get to meet so many people that way, and it's really inspiring.

Overall I have had a fantastic experience being a member of this Club. Here's to another 10 years!

The Start of the Winter Running Competition

Thanks to **Nick O'Connell** for sending this gem.

In the winter of **2011** we applied to enter the Berkshire cross country league so that we could have a Club focus for winter training. Unfortunately the league had already accepted a new club that year and did not feel able to accept us as well. Instead a tour of the local parkruns on the first Saturday of the month was organised, some points were allocated and winners crowned. As there were fewer parkruns at the time, this included doing Reading twice and going down to Frimley! The first event was at the ever-wet-and-muddy Reading parkrun on **5th November 2011** and the club finishers photo was duly taken with 13 members (out of about 60 at the time) in attendance. These were the days before club kit was really a thing (although one of the original cycling jerseys is being modelled below – how many of you still have one of those hanging around somewhere, or maybe even still being used?)



(from Left to Right) Claire Lait, Russell Facey, Colin Wilson (secretary), Caroline Macaskill (ladies' captain), Steve Stroud (kit/comms/chairman), Clive Alderson (head coach), unknown

Guest, Mark Gorst, Nick O'Connell (race secretary), Mark Callaghan, Antonio Almaraz Serrano, Nick Parris (kit secretary/men's captain), David Kirk & *(not in photo)* Ian Gosling.

The series was really popular, with about 40 members taking part over the 5 events, and rather than try for the cross country league again we decided to keep arranging our own fixtures! Over the years the range of events was broadened to include longer races and it evolved into the series which is happening now for the 10th time this winter.

Here's to the next 10 years!

Tri2O – Where My Triathlon Journey Began ...



by **Ellie Gosling**

Tri2O – where my triathlon journey began in 2010

After getting repeatedly annoyed with getting injured from running miles and miles and training for road marathons, I was introduced to the world of multi-sport to try and stop my body from breaking quite as much!! Not sure that has really helped – as I sit here typing this waiting for an operation on my foot for Tarsal Tunnel Syndrome!!! BUT it has introduced me to two new sports and an amazing world of people!

Tri2O Club became a big part of my life after my first Age Group qualifying event (which I think was my second/third ever triathlon!) in Redcar on a baltic and incredibly choppy September Sunday morning in 2011. I left the event with an age group qualifying result for the following year's World Championships in Auckland!!

Auckland 2012 was the most memorable World Championships for me – not for my result (I can't even remember where I came!) but for the group of people I spent most of our time with there – the Tri2O family; Edwina, Sean, Sally and Clare Lait. We made such great memories on this trip and this is where I really felt part of the Tri2O family, even more than all those 6am Friday morning Bradfield swims!! Coach Clive was my coach for this event and taught me SO much!

I really got the bug for Age Group events after Auckland and went on to compete at several World Triathlon and Duathlon championships – and not one of them was I ever on my own.... I think I'm right in saying that every championship I have been to Sean & Sally have been at too!!!!

But it isn't just about the World and European Championships – the events on our doorstep are just as memorable, including taking part in the Reading Triathlon 4 months post the birth of our first son to be presented on the podium with a packet of nappies from the funny guys at My Sporting Times!!!! And now those people are my work colleagues as I am the Events Director for My Sporting Times (Jubilee River Swim, Gut Buster, Mapledurham 10) so have to put up with their banter on a regular basis!!!

I also have VERY fond memories of the Hart Triathlon when it was a Club championships event for many years – and being really “tight” and not buying the Club kit and just buying an orange/black trisuit to try and fit in!!!!

Some “golden oldies” from the Club – Dom Dos Remedios, Callum Hughes and I set about trying to set up a Junior Club for Tri2O, **Tri2OTriStars**, some years ago – this proved tricky at the time due to all of our other commitments at the time and was put on the back burner.... A few years later, myself and another local triathlete, Kirsty Scott set up [Reading Rascals](#) Junior Triathlon Club which is hanging on in there through the pandemic, but at our peak we had 60 members attending a weekly training session – all inspired by the Tri2O family!

I have met life long friends through Tri2O and a training buddy (Lou!) I cannot shake off however hard I try – joking!! My life would be very different without my Tri2O family and Lou Gubb!!!

I also lost a very good friend through Tri2O – [Katie Henderson](#) – a truly inspirational athlete and amazing friend tragically taken way too soon. Memories of cycling across the width of the country with Katie, trying to keep up with her when she was doing a swim warm up and I was swimming flat out and eating chocolate constantly will never be forgotten.

Tri2O is so much more than just a triathlon club....thank you.

Mallorca 70.3 (2014)



by Tim Challinor (first published May 2014)

Never have I felt more normal walking around in Lycra than I did in Alcudia! Probably something to do with the other 3999 triathletes all preparing to race Mallorca 70.3. Going down to the beach to swim the course and seeing a couple of hundred others all putting wetsuits on in a holiday resort was hilarious.

It was an awesome race in a great location with perfect weather. I highly recommend it to anyone.

Callum and I travelled over together and met Clive who was staying in the same resort. We were lucky to have a seasoned pro to show us round, or more accurately usher us to where we needed to be, when we needed to be there. I'm sure by the end of the week he was telling us to be ready 20 mins earlier than needed as we were never ready on time.

I can't complain with my race! I took a bit of a beating in the swim, but I guess that's to be expected when 500 guys in a small section of beach run and dive into the sea at the same time. 27:30 was around the time I had hoped for. The bike course was amazing, really quick with a mountain in the middle and the stunning views. I surprised myself by avoiding being overtaken too many times, dragging myself up the climb and, better still, only being overtaken by a few on the way down, which is a result for someone as bad at descending as I

am. Riding the course before hand and following Callum's lines on the decent really helped. The only annoyance was the huge packs that formed on the way back in, but I guess it's hard to avoid when so many are racing, still it gave my legs a rest. 2:33 was quicker than I expected. The run was hot! And again, I learnt I need to a) not run the first few miles at my standalone 10k pace and b) water and nutrition are needed. The final few miles were a challenge but 1:32 was still a good result for me. I was glad the sea was close by to cool down after. My inability to walk in a straight line and blurred vision must have meant I worked hard (or what happens when you don't eat and drink on the run!) Two bottles of coke, a beer and a massage later and I was feeling ok. A very pleasing 4:40:53 was the result of my mornings work and probably 5 minutes quicker than I thought.

And it was awesome results all round for the Tri2o'ers

Callum 4:41 5th off the bike in his age group, but with an injury had to struggle round the run.

Clive 4:53 4th in age group

Greg 5:05 victory against his mate

Oli 5:37 survived the stag do

Jennie 6:43 with hardly any training at all

The rest of Saturday was spent eating and drinking and recovering. Sunday was an easy recovery ride to a Wiggins cafe for lunch, a swim in the sea and then out to celebrate Callum's 30th with a nice meal and few shots of some local spirit. A great way to finish a brilliant trip.



We would love to hear from you.

The next newsletter will be in February 2021, please send your contribution to info@tri2o.club before **10th February 2021**.

We would **love to hear from you**, particularly if you have taken on a new challenge or are new to triathlon



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

