

MARS Triathlon 2006

28th August

Thank you for taking part in this year's event. I hope you found it enjoyable and will return again in future years.

When I first devised the race in 2003 we had 26 people taking part. Back then I never imagined that I would be taking over 140 entries 3 years later. In fact, a fortnight ago I was beginning to wonder with how we would accommodate everyone, hence the earlier start times for many of you. Anyway, I remembered something an old boss of mine once said – “We always say we can do it then work out how to do it.”

Matlock and the surrounding area is a great place in many ways with a wide range of events taking place – shows, markets, well dressings, art and culture even if it does lack a decent sports centre. The people are full of new ideas and are a source of inspiration and I was therefore unsurprised to see that the Matlock Festival of Road Works has been put in place again this summer. There are numerous examples of all shapes and sizes of holes on display with glorious exhibitions of working machinery.....and what more, it's free of charge! They are all very popular exhibits. You only have to look at the people queuing up to see that. Unfortunately, for me, it arrived in town a little earlier than I would have liked which completely wrecked my cycle route. I can only apologise for the late alterations and the shortness of the route but, nevertheless, I hope you liked the scenery. All being well we'll be back on the original course next year.

I recall waking up during the night last night to the sound of heavy rain. It was about half past one and it reminded me of the weather that we seem to have each year at and around the time of this event. I am confident that one year we will be blessed with some splendid late summer sunshine on race morning and I hope that I won't be too old to enjoy it.

So, on with the race. Again we had all sorts of abilities taking part but everyone had one thing in common – being up for a challenge. Whether it was to win or just get round, the sense of achievement can be the same and I hope that this is passed on by you to others in all aspects of life.

Over a third of you were taking part in your first triathlon and many previous first-timers were there again, so well done to all of you.

Of course, these events require vast amounts of input by way of time. I would like to thank all those who have helped – the Davey family from the Matlock and District Swimming Club, Tony Holmes and his mates from the Matlock Cycling Club who marshalled the cycle route and my friends from Matlock Athletic Club particularly Randell Tassell for the assistance with everything. Thanks to Jim and Janice Allen for the finish and results.

I think it was good that our Mayor, Sue Burfoot, was able to come and see what goes off in Matlock when most sensible people are still in bed. I've now heard the story about her injured wrist and it was mildly amusing.....I can see why she wanted to keep it quiet.

A few things have been learnt from the event again to make improvements for the future and I would welcome your feedback. Please feel free to e-mail or call me.

Apologies in advance if there are any errors in the results. If you spot any, please let me know and I'll try and amend them.

Congratulations to the winners of all categories. The main players were as follows:

Men – Damian Thacker

- Matt Hammerton
- Chris Nicoll

Ladies – Verity Butler

- Liz Batt
- Louise Reynolds

**Novices – Michael Rowson, James Barber, Tim Rowson.
- Natalie Alleyne, Wiz Pasteur, Claire Sanderson.**

Over 40 – Bruce Dawson, Karen Toplass

Over 50 – Simon Brister, Fay Atkinson

Over 60 – William Hammerton

Under 18 – James Mantell, Penny Rowson

Youngest – Emily Cunningham (10)

There were a number of items of kit left behind, some named, some not. It is being stored in the lost property at the swimming pool at the moment. If you want me to rescue any of it before it is thrown out, give me a call – 01629 734091 or e-mail.

Unfortunately no-one left me a nice carbon-framed bike.

Finally, the event's primary purpose is to raise funds for the Matlock Area Recreation and Sports Group. This year's total stands at £802.

Thanks once again and I hope to see many of you again in future years.....

.....back on the original course.

Karl Webster.