



Pulse Triathlon Club



Pulse Port Beach Sprint Triathlon - 9th September 2017

PRE-RACE

Despite some summer race fatigue setting in, after doing the Glin Sprint race recently I had an almighty goo on me this week for another “**fast twitch muscle**” workout. So, after a bit of a scurry, registration for this event was secured on Thursday – 2 days before race day. Major gratitude to ATC member (and Quest conqueror) Colin Mulkerrins for assisting with onsite registration & race pack pick up. Apparently, Colin is available for all your delivery needs relating to online purchases in Cycle Superstore Tallaght!!!!

This sprint event takes place at Port beach, just north of the village of Clogherhead in Co. Louth. It's a TI National Series race so attracts big numbers (over 400 age groupers “AG's”) & some quality athletes - as well as yours truly! It's a bit of a trip up from Athy (90mins drive) but all motorway. While I travelled solo, ATC had several members participating, including club stalwarts **Team Kavanagh** ensuring our club flag was planted at yet another event.



THE COURSE, CONDITIONS & TACTICS:

The course consists of a 750m sea swim along Port beach, followed by a 19.5km single loop cycle on fully closed roads, and a 4.8km out and back run that takes competitors to the finish line back at Port Beach. The forecast was for wet and windy and fair play to Met Eireann, they got it spot on! Despite the weather, pre-race tasks (parking, registration, set up, briefings etc) were smooth & come 1pm it was game time. 2 waves for CAT1, then 3 waves for AG heroes. Previous years saw a preferred earlier start time. This would defo be my last Triathlon of the year so my tactics were simple. Survive the swim, head down on the bike; head up on the run – full throttle. Time to try being a hare instead of my usual tortoise!

The Swim - A rectangular course, swim out 100m, head North (parallel to the beach) for 550m and then back in to the beach exit, which is nice and close to T1. I was placed in the final wave, with fellow ‘**MAMIL's**’ Pdraig & Rob. A beach run in to start, thicco here attempting to stay on the heels of Kavo up front, got absolutely battered. One of the most unnerving swims I've ever had. That said I avoided the Jellyfish army. Many were not so lucky, including our own lads Pdraig & Darren. Several victims understandably retired from the race as a result. Our lads (unbelievably) battled on. Athy men are made of tough stuff. This was a hard swim, and times for all generally reflected that.



T1 – Neutralised & nice and compact, allowed for a relatively quick turnaround. I spotted Pdraig in T1. He was clearly feeling the effects of the jellyfish kiss – but he spurred me on following the disheartening swim. I tried the shoes clipped on the bike & no socks routine again. Made an absolute holy show of myself at the mount line, couldn't get my feet in, elastic bands didn't snap & I had to unclip, dismount and revert to putting on the shoes like a normal person. I will not be shoe showboating in future.

The Bike is a nice traffic free route, and while there are 4 fairly sharp left hand turns, and a few drags, it is generally good road surfaces all the way and potentially a fast course. The wind and rain on the day however made it a slower, trickier cycle. Not much of note (scenery wise) but definitely worth mentioning the marshals. A hard day for anyone standing about in those conditions & almost to a fault they were super supportive.

T2 – A nice quick in & out. Yeay, time for a fun run.....

The Run is a straight forward 2.4km out and back circuit. While I felt like I'd not lost/gained too much time on the bike, I had held a little in reserve & fully expected the run to be my best discipline of the day. I'm not fast by any measure (I'm a very content middle of the pack runner) but relative to the other two disciplines this is my "strong leg". Plus I love to empty the tanks on the run to the finish so that's exactly what I did. With the course being an out and back there are "targets" the whole way which really helps. I felt I passed my fair share finishing the 4.8km run in 20:36, for an all in time of 1:21:17. Met by the ATC crew who'd finished ahead of me, I joined them as we waited till everyone was home. We really should adopt the **Liverpool FC Anthem "You'll never Tri alone"** as our own club tune. Super comradery shown as always from start to finish.



FINAL THOUGHTS:

Even with the pure manky weather (& aided by a slightly shortened bike & run course) this race provided me with an official Sprint Tri PB (another dent in TriAth's claim of being "Ireland's fastest course"!!!) so I happily give it a thumbs up. Fact is all ATC participants clocked super times despite the conditions:

Pos	Name	Race No	Time	Category	Categ Pos	Gender	Gender Pos	swim	T1	cycle	T2	Run
CAT113	Niall Foley	31	01:02:32		CAT113	Male		13 00:11:51	00:00:35	00:32:06	00:00:23	00:17:38
4	Conor Tiernan	166	01:05:42	30-34		2 Male		4 00:14:31	00:01:26	00:32:50	00:01:12	00:15:45
42	Michelle Brennan	66	01:12:17	20-24		1 Female		1 00:12:45	00:01:28	00:36:25	00:01:19	00:20:21
64	Darren Foley	161	01:13:47	Junior		10 Male		61 00:14:21	00:01:30	00:35:55	00:01:26	00:20:36
67	Cormac Kelly	568	01:13:59	Junior		11 Male		64 00:15:49	00:01:13	00:37:37	00:01:18	00:18:02
CAT132	Caitlin Mc Donald	41	01:15:16		CAT132	Female		9 00:12:48	00:00:37	00:39:29	00:00:33	00:21:50
86	Robert O'brien	162	01:15:30	40-44		15 Male		79 00:15:06	00:01:28	00:38:34	00:01:24	00:18:59
162	Eamonn Mcentee	561	01:21:17	40-44		25 Male		143 00:17:46	00:01:51	00:39:07	00:01:59	00:20:36
167	Padraig Kavanagh	165	01:21:37	45-49		15 Male		148 00:16:37	00:01:54	00:39:15	00:01:39	00:22:13
303	Karen Kavanagh	160	01:33:18	45-49		11 Female		59 00:20:16	00:02:02	00:45:36	00:01:30	00:23:56
309	Nici O' Neill	156	01:33:37	35-39		13 Female		61 00:20:55	00:03:58	00:43:05	00:02:36	00:23:04
330	Dylan Poole	164	01:36:58	45-49		38 Male		260 00:18:04	00:05:24	00:47:12	00:02:39	00:23:41

Apologies to any members omitted, full results can be found here: <http://chipit.ie/pulse-port-sprint-tri/>

While the entry fee of €50 is a bit pricy (Glin was €30) it is worth it given the race is very well organised, on closed roads and professionally managed/marshalled by a really friendly club. The goodie bag also included a really nice T-shirt (one of the best design and quality wise I've collected over the years) and the medal isn't too shabby either. This race would really suit those stepping up from Try distance (once happy with your sea swim skills) or those chasing Sprint PB's. Pity it's not on earlier in the year (or earlier in the day) but one for the 2018 calendar for sure.

Final thanks to Karen Kavanagh's family, who live nearby, and had me cleaned up, well fed & watered before sending me south for the winter. According to John Snow "winter is coming" lads so the Tri suit is now back behind the wall/wardrobe. Fellow **GOT geeks** will get that!!!



A few snaps of the day – Loads more on Facebook - ATC Members page:

