



TRIATHLON

Basics

What is Triathlon?

Well the actual word comes from the Greek Treis - three and athlos - competition - so a Multisport race of swimming, cycling and running over various distances. (May be useful for a pub quiz!)

There are however other Multisport events that also come under British Triathlon:

- * Duathlon - run, bike, run - these events often take place at the start and end of the season (early spring/late autumn - when it is too cold for a swim!)
- * Aquathlon - swim, run
- * Swim,run - this differs from an aquathlon in that it is outdoors - coastal and is a series of swim, run, swim , run, swim run..... etc..
- * Aquabike - swim, bike
- * Cross triathlon/duathlon - 'off road' event (mountain/cyclocross bike)

Some events may have slight variations for example the swim may be replaced the with kayaking, surf ski or stand up paddle boarding.

What are the most common distances?

Super sprint : 400m swim (200m if swim is pool based) , 10km bike, 2.5 km run

Sprint: 750m swim (400m if pool based) , 20km bike, 5km run

Olympic/Standard: 1500m swim (800m if pool based) , 40km bike, 10km run

Middle / 1/2 Iron(man) : 1900m swim, 90km bike (56 miles), 21.1km run (half marathon)

Full /Iron (man) : 3.8km swim, 180km bike (112 miles) 42.2 km run (full marathon)

For smaller locally run events the distances for each discipline do vary slightly - this is often applicable to the super sprint and sprint events.

The Olympic is the distance currently in the Olympic Games, but also called a Standard distance. (Although rumours are this may be reviewed!)

And now for the complex bit.... The 1/2 and full Iron(man) ~ Many people refer to these races as a full or a half ironman but actually they mean the distance . Ironman® is actually one of the companies that run these events - many of you may have seen their logo



(If not look on the legs of some of our triathletes!) It is one of the biggest (and the most expensive) brands in triathlon.

One of the most common questions asked when people are looking at triathlon is:

- *“What kit do I need - it all seems very complicated and expensive?”*

And yes it can be very expensive but it doesn't have to be! I will cover the kit for each discipline in more detail separately, but basically if you have a swim suit, a road worthy bike (a mountain bike is fine to begin with) and your run gear then you have enough to get started! (I have on more than one occasion seen bikes with shopping baskets on the front in transition areas! - not a bad idea for fuelling on the go if you ask me)

The other thing that can be a minefield for those looking into triathlon is some of the terminology used - it sounds at times like a whole different language. So I am going to attempt to explain some of the terms used with a simple glossary of the most common things you will hear and again when looking at each discipline in more detail I am sure there will be more!

Transition

Often referred to as the 4th discipline - this is the part of the race where you change kit from one discipline to the next so swim to bike or bike to run. I will dedicate a whole piece to transition as it is such a vital part of the event which comes with its own little quirky rules - I may even divulge some secrets of our Trotters triathletes...

Trisuit

A one or two piece suit used in triathlon, often kept on for the whole event and can be worn under a wetsuit and has a thin pad for cycling.

Road bike (and tri bars)

The most common bike used for triathlon is a road bike and there are literally hundreds of variations to choose from - again there will be a whole section on this another time. Tri-bars can be added (clipped on) to most road bikes allowing the rider to get down into 'the position' which is more aerodynamic.

Brick session

A training session with two disciplines back to back - usually a bike run - helping you to get used to that 'jelly leg' feeling when you get off the bike.

Drafting

Referred to in the swim and bike sections where you travel close behind the competitor in front - this gives an advantage of saving energy. However most triathlon races are non-drafting during the cycle and there are penalties for breaking this rule.

Mount/dismount line

Where you get on and off your bike - again there are penalties for getting this wrong

Bonking

The term used when you completely run out of energy during a session/race.

HRM

Heart rate monitor - either wrist based or a chest strap measuring your heart rate as you exercise. Some athletes base their training programmes around their heart rate and there are many training plans based on this type of training.

The terminology I have chosen here is what I have heard and used most commonly but I thought I ought to look this subject up online in case I have missed any obvious ones - that is where I came across the following which I have never heard used before - can't think why:

TIT

Triathlete in training - not sure whether we will be using this one?

Well as I have said I will be writing some info about each discipline in more detail separately over the coming weeks, but if you are interested in finding out more or looking at triathlon head over to British Triathlon <https://www.britishtriathlon.org/> or take a look at SuperLeague Triathlon <https://superleaguetriathlon.com/> which is a fairly new and exciting set of races with both an arena tour and championship each year also the GTN/GCN (Global triathlon and Global cycling networks) on you tube are great for information and tips about all things triathlon and cycling.