

STC Transition Talk with Pete Osborne

For our latest installment of Transition Talk we talk with Pete Osborne, our membership secretary. Pete has a long and varied history of competitive sports, but it's only when things get really busy that he's found time to train for his first Ironman. We chatted to Pete before one of our club aquathons:

STC: Hi Pete, We're glad you could talk with us today! I'm going to jump straight in and ask how you get from holding a Beer Mile world best time – something you told me about at the Club Annual Dinner – to doing triathlons?

Pete: Well I'd actually done my first triathlon before I ever took part in the Beer Mile. In 2009 I entered the Sheffield Half Marathon to raise money for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital where my niece had been born a couple of months beforehand, three months early. The Sheffield Half really got me back into running and later that year I entered my first triathlon (Derby sprint distance triathlon). The following year, I did my second triathlon in Keswick, which included an open-water swimming where I cut my foot, needing stitches after the event!

STC: So you just jumped straight in, so to speak, with a triathlon?

Pete: Not exactly; I've always done some sport or other. As a child I swam at county level – I even did the swim leg of a triathlon relay with my Scouts troop, in a freezing outdoor pool. When the training for swimming got too much, I drifted in to orienteering for a few years in my teens. But by the time I came to Sheffield University, I was a keen & competitive mountain biker seeking out the hills. I was competing at a National level and even won the Midlands BMX Series one year. I stopped the competitive BMX due to how much time I needed to put in to training; it wasn't something I'd done as a young child, so I needed to keep up the hours to keep my skills on a par with some of the others. I still enjoy it recreationally.

STC: No stranger to swimming, cycling and running then. Has triathlon come relatively easy to you?

Pete: Unfortunately backstroke was my swimming forte. I've still got a lot of work to do on my front crawl. But I've managed two middle distance triathlons now, I won't be getting out of the water first any time soon though.

STC: So the next step is....?

Pete: My first Ironman, the Outlaw in Nottingham.

STC: No time for BMX, but enough time for an Ironman?

Pete: Yes, it's all about making the most of opportunities to train that fit around work and family. Sometimes I can go for a run from work at lunchtime. If I'm away at a conference, maybe I'll fit in a run before the evening meal. If I'm at home, I can spend an hour on the turbo instead of watching tv without anyone missing me! I'll do my long run now, straight after the aquathon.

STC: It all sounds a bit hit or miss though?

Pete: Not at all. If I plan ahead, I find I can stick to my training plan.



STC: So what top tip do you have for others taking on their first Ironman – or any distance for that matter?

Pete: Have a structured plan so that each session serves a purpose and you are more likely to stick to it. Figure out where your training opportunities are. And don't swim backstroke!

STC: Finally, we know what you do for our club, as membership secretary, but what do you feel Sheffield Triathlon Club does for you?

Pete: For me, the benefit of belong to STC is that it provides opportunities to go training with other like-minded people. Everyone has different pressures on their time and sometimes we all need some extra motivation. The fact that there are a range of different sessions which cover a whole range of abilities helps me to get out there and train when perhaps I'd rather sit at home and watch a film. It also means that I can normally find a session that fits with my training plan.

STC: Thanks for your insights Pete, and we hope the Ironman training continues to go well.