



Ayrodynamic Triathlon Club

Ayr Open Water Sprint

- an ideal introduction to open water triathlons by Stewart Bailey, Ayrodynamic TC coach

Ayr Open Water Sprint Triathlon organised by Ayrodynamic Triathlon Club offers the best introduction to open water triathlon. Okay, I may be biased, but seriously, it's an ideal introduction for anyone wishing to make the step from pool-based to open water triathlons.

So what is it about the race that makes the swim so easy? Firstly, it's at the mouth of the River Doon in Ayr, so although it's tidal, it's freshwater. Secondly, it's shallow: the average height triathlete could stop and stand on the bottom of the river at most points on the swim course. Thirdly, the race starts at high tide and at this time the river stops flowing. So there is no current for a short while making it easy to swim upstream. Then there is a truly outstanding feature of the swim course, lane ropes! A lane rope divides the river in two, so swimmers swim up one side, turn at a buoy at the end and then swim down the other side for two laps.

As if all that's not enough, swimmers are given colour coded swim caps depending on their swimming ability. So the fast folks are placed at the front of the swim start and the slowest swimmers at the back. That minimises physical interaction between swimmers at the start. The race is also good for spectators since a bridge crosses the river right at the start giving spectators an ideal vantage point to view the swim. Together all these features make the race an ideal introduction to open water triathlons.

The bike course quickly leaves the town and is out on an undulating country road to the village of Dunure and back. This includes a couple of stiff little climbs, some long straights and some nippy descents. Most competitors probably don't notice, but the bike course also has some spectacular views of the Clyde, including Ailsa Craig and the Isle of Arran. The run is a mix, after a short run on the road it follows a farm track, before returning through some leafy streets and a final home straight along a stretch of grass. The changing facilities are basic, however the after-race food is legendary.

This year's race takes place on Sunday 15th June, starting at 10:15. You can enter online at the Entry Central website www.entrycentral.com.

For further information/entry form, contact:

John Strawhorn,
63 Station Rd,
Mauchline,
KA5 5EU

ph: 01290 550079

email: strawhorns@aol.com or visit www.ayrodynamic.co.uk