



Night & Day Race Report

Shalford – Abinger Hammer
15/16 July 2017

Wow! What an Adventure packed event, with lots of activities to satisfy even the keenest Adventure Racer!



After the success of my first 12 hour Night & Day Adventure Race last year in Effingham, I decided to design a new event around the experience and feedback of last year's event. What an experience it turned out to be! Not just for me and my crew, but also for the 23 adventurers who lined up for the start at 10pm outside Shalford Village Hall. We had some new and some returning Tri-Adventurers at this event, with people travelling from as far away as Cumbria, Cardiff, and Kent.

There were 63 Checkpoints, totalling 930 points, up for grabs, over the 5 challenging stages around the Surrey Hills, which this year included a SUP stage in the early hours of Sunday morning. Planning and setting the course was a real labour of love, with some checkpoints in challenging locations. The results splits breakdown really shows the variety of strategies and routes people took.



There were a few apprehensive faces in the event HQ once the race packs had been received and the planning was underway. 12 hours is a long time to plan for, never mind the fact that it was over night and there was a lot of distance to cover. Fortunately, the dry and warm weather was just right for this event. There was no bright moon this year at the start, but the warm, still conditions provided some comfort for those who needed it! We were very fortunate with the weather – not too hot, yet still and warm – giving us ideal racing conditions. Despite the heavy rain over the last few weeks, the going was “good to firm”, and apart from a few fights with the stingers, scratches and grazes from the brambles, everyone got through pretty much in one piece. Mind you, there were some pretty tired bodies at the end and, once breakfast was over, and we started to clear up, we noticed one or two racers sprawled out on the grass, fast asleep!



The race packs had the maps and a route book which laid out what adventures the competitors had in store for them. Stand Up Paddle Boarding in the early hours of Sunday morning, and loads of running and mountain biking, all to look forward to over the coming 12 hours. Unlike last year, Tom Newton managed to avoid pulling a muscle while warming up, although we were a bit concerned about his partner, Stuart Stevens, who was taking on this challenge with shin splints. The pain killers seemed to work well, as he managed to complete the course, and I hope, Stuart, you're not suffering too much today! Helen and Daniel Murphy delayed their holiday departure to the French Alps so that they could take part and, once they'd finished their breakfast, they were straight off to catch a plane; such is their commitment to adventure racing, and we really appreciate that.

10pm saw the start with competitors all setting off in much the same direction, and soon they realised they were in for some tough moments, as they struggled to find the first path.



With Stage 1 under their belts by about 11.30pm, competitors took to their bikes for the ride to Transition 2 in Abinger Hammer with 16 checkpoints en route for the taking with plenty of route choices. I'm very grateful to Barry and Leona Watts who volunteered to run this transition, welcoming competitors with some refreshments and words of encouragement before their run. After the running stage, just as dawn was approaching, it was back on the bikes again for 10 more checkpoints, before getting back to Shalford for some more instructions. There were no major mechanical problems with any of the bikes this year, although Andrew Derrick did get a puncture just as he and his partner were about 100 yards from arriving at transition.

This year, Stage 5 was a three parter, with a mixture of SUP and running combined. 3 checkpoints on the paddle boards, and 10 running ones, which could be collected in any order using an Orienteering map and an old map from 1920.

This stage proved very popular, although, at one point, I thought it might not even happen. I was at the start for the SUP, when Skip arrived to find that a gate which is never locked was, indeed, locked this morning. So, it was decided to reverse the route, and we moved the start to Broadford Road Bridge. It seemed to work well, and everyone loved this new discipline. No-one fell in, and there were some impressively straight and speedy lines cut through the water, even after 9 hours of physically challenging racing. The old map that was handed out on this stage proved a bit challenging for some, even when linked to the Stage 1 map, and it shows just how much our land has changed over the years. After a night of racing, it was great to see competitors come together again to hit the 2 hour window on this stage, giving them an opportunity to share stories and experiences from the 'dark' stages.

Almost everyone completed the Challenge within the 12 hour limit, and congratulations to you all. Marc Ebanks was just over 30 seconds late; wasn't 12 hours' racing enough for you, Marc? What an achievement by everyone! Despite overwhelming tiredness, people still had the strength to manage a prepared breakfast of sausages, bacon, beans and fried eggs, whilst sharing their experiences of a pretty adventurous night with one another.



All participants received a commemorative medal as they finished, and prizes were awarded to the winners of the three categories.



Many congratulations to all our winners, and a special word for Alan Hartley, who travelled down from Cumbria to take part. Hannah Cooke who was racing in the dark for the first time. Commiserations of the night must be reserved for Ross Remnant and Rob Smart; they finished second in the pairs, just 10 points behind the winners ... BUT, had they remembered to dib at the final CP when completing the SUP, they would have been credited with 20 points, enabling them to win this category. Bad luck, guys; I bet you won't make that mistake next year! This left the pairing of James Lea-Cox and John Pattison to win their second Night and Day title having won the inaugural event in 2013.

RESULTS (12 HOUR EVENT)

Male	Points/Time	
1st Alan Hartley	780	11:32:45
2nd Romualdas Stupelis	760	11:17:53
3rd Mark Chryssanthou	690	11:37:53
Female	Points/Time	
1st Hannah Cooke	630	11:54:16
2nd Caroline Wharton	615	11:48:42
3rd Pat Daas	505	11:36:30
Pairs	Points/Time	
1st John Pattison/James Lea-Cox	775	11:37:51
2nd Ross Remnant/Rob Smart	765	11:50:07
3rd Helen Murphy/Daniel Murphy	700	11:25:04

Everyone told me that it had been a wonderful event, with just the right amount of challenge – both physical and mental. The shorter distance between the two transitions worked very well, as did the route layout, as it enabled racers to bump into one another as they followed their own plans around the course. The one sour note was struck by some mindless yobs who removed one of the control checkpoints during the actual race. Apart from the £130 cost, this is so frustrating as there is nothing we, as organisers, can do to prevent this happening. Fortunately, it didn't affect the overall enjoyment of the event, and those who visited the location were credited the points anyway.

The full race results, with splits and transition times, are available on the Tri-Adventure [website here](#).

Photos taken at the event can be found and tagged in our [Facebook album here](#).

If you have photos to add from this event, please do email them, tweet them to @tri_adventure, Instagram Tri_AdventureUK, or post them on Facebook.

Once again, thanks for taking part and supporting this hugely challenging event. I hope that you all managed to get back home safely, and I look forward to seeing you again at a Tri-Adventure event.



Thanks also to the regular Tri-Adventure team of Chris and Leszek who, together with myself, worked very hard to make the event as enjoyable an experience as possible for everyone taking part.



Many thanks to Scott (Skip) and his son Ronnie for providing the SUP part of the event. Thanks, too, to Barry and Leona Watts, for looking after the Abinger Hammer transition, and then to Barry for helping out at the Finish, once the last racer had been through the remote transition. Thanks, too, to Sarah (Andy Woodhouse's partner), for helping out with the breakfasts. I think everyone would agree that the breakfast was first rate!

I hope to see as many of you as possible this Sunday, at Holmbury St Mary.

Yours in Adventuring,

Adam