



THE HURTLEBERRY RACE REPORT

SUNDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2018

This was Tri-Adventure's 4th running of the Annual Hurtleberry and, once again, we were rewarded with a beautiful day, ideal racing conditions, and some fantastic competition. The dry weather we have all enjoyed over the last few months provided for fast racing conditions, and Ross Smith put in a first class performance in the **Men's Full Duathlon**, breaking the race record in 1:59:52 – the first time that the sub 2 hour time has been bettered.

The “**Hurtleberry**” is a mean, full purple fruit, that is native to this part of the UK. And, if participant reactions are anything to go by, they took part in a mean event that stretched their stamina and, in one or two cases, their hamstrings as well!

Sunday's race turned out to be one of the best events we've ever run, with participants travelling from mainland Europe to take part, as they prepare for the October ETU World Championships in Ibiza. Time and again, participants commented how great the course was: challenging, yet not impossible, and well marked, thereby offering something for everyone. The online feedback is also very positive, and we're pleased that so many really enjoyed themselves. We run this event on behalf of the Friends of the Hurtwood, to raise money for the upkeep and general maintenance of the area, and we were really pleased to be back again in this beautiful part of Surrey.

As there had been very little rain over the last few days, the course was in excellent shape. The sun came out as forecast, and it was still and mild, offering the racers excellent conditions for running and biking. This is an annual off-road event, comprising Sprint and Full Duathlons as well as a 10k Trail Run, a 10k Canicross, and a MTB challenge. Set in the beautiful Hurtwood in the Surrey Hills, the network of trails here attracts Adventurers seeking a thrill.



It has been great to see year on year, this event grows in popularity and, this year, the Full Duathlon proved particularly popular, with 39 starters. Joining them at the staged start beside the picturesque Holmbury St Mary Cricket Club, were 21 Sprint Duathletes, 14 Trail Runners and 6 dogs in the Canicross. The two Duathlon events and the 10k Trail Run were first off at 9.00am, followed a few minutes later by the 10k Canicross runners, pulled along by their enthusiastic dogs. All of a sudden, what had been a bustling village area 15 minutes earlier, was now an eerily quiet place, with just the organisers and race officials left to get on with the business.

It is really pleasing to see so many of our regular Tri-Adventurers taking a break from our usual navigation based events, and following a waymarked route.

The events provided a high class of competition in all the categories, with clear winners in the Full Duathlon and in the Trail Run. The **Male Sprint Duathlon** produced the tightest finish, with just 30 seconds separating the winner, Nick Smith, from second placed Jim Morris. It was good to see so many people back from last year, trying to better their times, which many did. In fact, there are numerous examples of athletes who have taken part in the Hurtleberry several times over the last four years, and whose performances have improved significantly over the years. There's not enough room to mention everyone, but examples include **Naomi Brewer** (this year's winner of the **Ladies' Full Duathlon**), whose 2:51:27 was 43 minutes faster than her 2013 time; **Jon Heasman** in the **Men's Full Duathlon** took a full 8 minutes off last year's time; or **Jim Morris** in the **Men's Sprint Duathlon**, who was 3rd in 2017, and 2nd this year, taking 4½ minutes off his previous time – a bit faster on the MTB, and you'll probably win it next year!



The **Full Duathlon** had the largest field and didn't disappoint. This year, **Ross Smith**, from Bournemouth/Cycleworks/Trek, led from the start and, although he was closely pushed by some of the other athletes during the early part of the race, he was clearly the strongest by the end of the race, winning by an 8 minute margin, and breaking the 2 hour Hurtleberry barrier for the first time **Gerald Tudor** was second, closely followed by **Jon Heasman** (mentioned above). The two laps of the bike loop are particularly punishing, but they offer some of the best trails and single tracks Surrey has to offer.

The **Ladies' Full Duathlon** was impressively won by **Naomi Brewer**, who finished almost 25 minutes ahead of second placed **Laura Dawkin**, with **Julie Da Silva** in third place.



Nick Smith just managed to hold off **Jim Morris** in the **Men's Sprint Duathlon**, coming in 30 seconds in front, with **Graham Pentney** finishing just under a minute behind. Jim had the better run times in the first and third legs, but it was Nick's speed on the bike and faster Transition Times which made the difference.



Rachel Roberts put in an amazing effort in the **Ladies' Sprint Duathlon**, becoming a comfortable winner, finishing over 6 minutes ahead of **Ilze Skabarniecere**, with **Jenny Deacon** in third place.



There were fewer runners this year in the **10k Trail Run**, and the Men's Event was won by Alexander Holland, who won the race comfortably in just under 52 minutes. **Geoff Wilson** held off a determined challenge from third placed **Jason Dawson**, coming in second with 5 seconds to spare. There was a tight race between the winner, **Barbara Rossouw** and **Danielle Kleynhams** in the **Ladies' 10k Trail Run**, with just 37 seconds separating them. **Chantelle Shekyls** was third.



The Canicross start was fabulous to watch, with the dogs full of beans and exuberance, waiting patiently (if a little excitedly) for the signal to start the race. I'm not sure who enjoys this event more, the runners or the dogs, as, at times, it seemed that it was the dogs who were being held back by their two-legged owners! The winners were **Natasha Swan** and Xiana in a great time of 54m10s in the **Ladies' Section**, and **Geoff Dickens** with the huge Husky in the **Men's Section**.

OUR WINNERS

Full Duathlon (10k run, 20k MTB, 5k run)

Male	Time
1 st Ross Smith	1h 59m 52s
2 nd Gerald Tudor	2h 07m 45s
3 rd Jon Heasman	2h 09m 39s
Female	Time
1 st Naomi Brewer	2h 51m 27s
2 nd Laura Dawkin	3n 16m 08s
3 rd Julie Da Silva	3h 22m 04s

Sprint Duathlon (5k run, 10k MTB, 1.5k run)

Male	Time
1 st Nick Smith	1h 05m 01s
2 nd Jim Morris	1h 05m 31s
3 rd Graham Pentney	1h 06m 26s
Female	Time
1 st Rachel Roberts	1h 25m 39s
2 nd Ilze Skabarniece	1n 32m 03s
3 rd Jenny Deacon	1h 58m 59s

10k Trail Run

Male	Time
1 st Alexander Holland	0h 51m 50s
2 nd Geoff Wilson	0h 59m 55s
3 rd Jason Dawson	1h 00m 00s
Female	Time
1 st Barbara Rossouw	1h 01m 28s
2 nd Danielle Kleynhams	1h 02m 05s
3 rd Chantelle Shekyls	1h 08m 15s

10k Canicross Trail Run

Male	Time
1 st Geoff Dickens	1h 03m 27s
2 nd Marc Hazlewood	1h 12m 33s
3 rd Jott Sharpe	1h 19m 06s
Female	Time
1 st Natasha Swan	0h 54m 10s
2 nd Lucy Hogg	0h 57m 10s
3 rd Sarah Burgess	1h 12m 31s

Congratulations to all our worthy winners, who received prizes kindly donated by Alton Sports and Tri-Adventure.

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

Photos taken at the event, including those taken by Ibadete from GeoSnaps, can be found here: www.geosnapshot.com.

If you have photos to add from the event, please do [email](#) them, tweet them to [@tri_adventure](#), use the [#hurtleberry](#) or post them on [Facebook](#).

It was really great to see so many supporters turning out to see friends and various members of their family experience pain and exhilaration, the latter emotion being more observable a few minutes after they got their breath back.

We were again fortunate to have on board the same main sponsor as last year - Alton Sports - who generously donating prizes to all the winners, and a goody bag to everyone taking part. Also, each participant received a medal to commemorate their achievements.

An awful lot of work goes on behind the scenes to stage an event like this, and I'd like to thank Mark Beaumont, the Hurtwood Ranger, for all his help and support, and for preparing the ground for the Event Village. Thanks, also, to Tracey Blandford, who helped out at Registration, took photos and video, and then helped us clear up after the event. Thanks, also, to Julia Edkins, Ed and Tom James, and Ben. Finally, many thanks to Gill and the Peaslake Village Shop, who supplied the volunteers with their lunch packs, and who brought along loads of lovely food and drink for us to enjoy. We noted the refreshments needed to be made available longer. We will endeavour to have the refreshments in the village with a gas fired urn available.

Tri-Adventure run Adventure Races throughout the year, so do look out for them on www.triaventure.co.uk, and follow us on Facebook and Twitter. The next event is on **14 October**, and will again be in the Surrey Hills, starting from **The Tilford Institute**, - we hope to see you there.

All in all, the event proved a great success, and there were lots of smiling yet exhausted faces. We look forward to welcoming everyone back again to next year's **Hurtleberry** event, which I think will be pencilled in to take place again on **Sunday 15 September, 2018**, so do put the date in your diary, and tell all your family, friends, and running/biking colleagues. There was also feedback about organising more Off-Road Duathlon events as there are now fewer about in the calender.

Future Tri-Adventure Events:

[Autumn/Winter Series 1 - Tilford Adventure Race](#), **Sunday 14th October 2018**.

4 hour event Experience, 2 hour Sprint, Trail, or Mountain Bike only.

[Autumn/Winter Series 2 – Tyler Hill \(Canterbury\) Adventure Race](#), **Sunday 25th November 2018**.

4 hour event Experience, 2 hour Sprint, Trail, or Mountain Bike only.

Finally, please use Social Media to tell others about Tri-Adventure – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. We want to keep putting on fantastic events, which challenge people whilst making them feel good (as those of you who take part will confirm), and we need to get our participation levels up to make this happen.

Yours in Adventure,

Adam