

## Triathlon Newsletter Number 1

### Introduction

Hello everyone, and welcome to the first newsletter focussed on the Triathlon section of ERC. My name is Fraser Arnot and I've been a member for 8 years.

The club is undertaking a number of initiatives this year and one of them was to improve the general communications in the club and I volunteered to create a regular newsletter focussing on the Triathlon section, though hopefully it will be mildly interesting to all the Roadies out there also! The plan is for this newsletter to be fairly regular – more so in the summer perhaps than the winter – but hopefully with interesting content.

### A bit a more about me – your “editor”



I did my first triathlon at Stirling in 2001 (aged 39) and since then have done around 90 races...fewer as I got older! My background was running, with Penny Rother and I going back a good few years to our days with Edinburgh Athletic Club. I was however dire at swimming, regretting not trying harder when I was 8 years old living in South Africa. At Stirling in my first year, I was in the slowest heat and petrified with it.

As I underwent swim training, I progressed through the ranks and by 2007 had my first international representation in GB colours in Hamburg. I think I had also progressed to the fastest heat at Stirling and seen me go from the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on the bike to the top 5%.

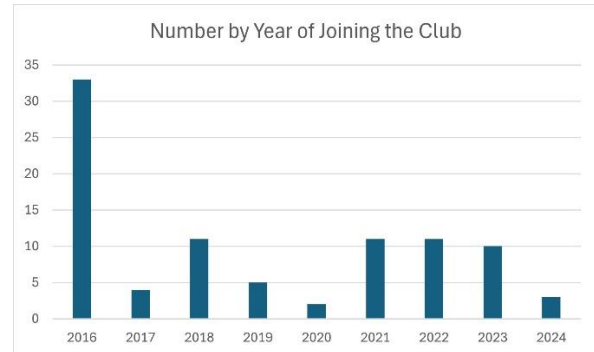
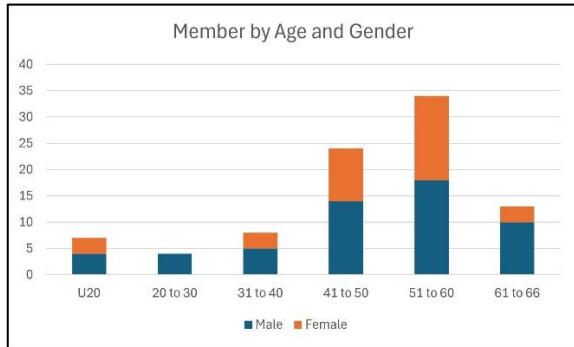
I continued to race – a few ups and downs - but came good again in 2018 racing at the European Championships in Tartu, Estonia and as a nice book end at the age of 61, returning to Hamburg yet again for the Worlds after a 16-year gap. I was rather proud of my longevity!

### What's the Plan?

Enough about me - what's the plan? Well, what I'd like to start off with on this edition is sharing a bit about who we are as a Triathlon section. Below are some “stats” so we all know a bit more about who comprises the triathletes in the club. I thought it would be interesting to share some of the demographics to see what sort of bunch we are.

For those that don't like looking at charts here's some key points.

- 90 total members who profess to be triathletes (35 female [39%), 55 males [61%])
- 71 of us (79%) are over 40 years of age with just over half, 52% over the age of 50!
- 48 of us (53%) have been members of the club for 6 or more years, with 33 (37%) at 8 years and counting!



### Next Issue(s)

Going forward there are three key topics I'd like to have as regular features for every edition. I'm hoping to do an **"athlete" profile** to extend the awareness of who is in the club and dare I say who some of the characters or diehards are! This may also prove to be inspirational.

The second topic will be **race reports** – hopefully! Who was there, how many competed, venue, course and weather information and maybe even photos.

Thirdly and building on #2 would be **race information (Great Races To Do)**. I know I've done races all over the country, but which ones are really good versus just ok? The plan here would be less a race report but more a venue report. Website, quality of organisation, entry size, prizes, issues – you name it.

### Great Races To Do (Bassenthwaite Triathlon, Lake District)

I might as well start off the "Great Races To Do" section with Issue 1.

As I've said I've done a number of races over the past 20+ years and I have a definite half a dozen favourites of at least ones I would strongly recommend.

My standout of recent years has to be Bassenthwaite Triathlon run by Tri Lakeland (<https://www.trilakeland.com/bass-triathlon>). The race this year is on August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and is always this weekend in August. The website gives all the information you need for the Standard and the Sprint Race. I have done both over the years and have raced here multiple times, most recently three straight years before Covid and the last two years post.

Why do I like it?

1. It's a 1pm start so no getting up at silly o'clock. It is a wee bit of a drive from Edinburgh but only about 2.5hrs and really not an issue. I go down and back in the day. I usually leave around 8am to give myself a margin of safety. Being at the top of the Lakes you can take the back roads from Carlisle and avoid Keswick.
2. It's very well organised with loads of very helpful and happy volunteers.

3. It's not an overly large race with about 150 each in the Sprint and Standard (300 racing in total)
4. It's a gorgeous venue. What's not to like about the Lakes and the race is up at the top of Lake Bassenthwaite with a stunning view over Skiddaw.
5. The bike course is also fast and actually quite safe. You might think down the A66 would be dodgy, but I've never found cars or lorries an issue on either side of the lake. Last year because of terrible weather and gale force winds the bike leg was shortened to basically encompass the extra loop the Standard race does. This is a little more challenging – a shade under 13 miles – and even safer. I half expected this year for them to keep the change in place but looks as if they have kept to the traditional course
6. It's also a long bike – nearer 16+ (27k) miles and suits me as the bike is probably my strongest discipline these days. It is also a fast course too, with no real hills. Ideal for your TT bike.

I think that's enough positives. It's really a fabby race. But there is one downside. The run. It's 6km and has the most brutal hill in it at around a mile and half (the hill is even worse if you are doing the standard). I pride myself if I manage to keep running all the way to the top (unlike 2022 – ugh!). Mind you it's all downhill for the last 2.5 miles!

I'll save my other great races to do for future editions.

## Races 2024

### **Borders Series**

14/4 Galashiels Sprint and Come and Tri  
19/5 Selkirk Standard  
9/6 Eyemouth Sprint and C and T  
11/8 Kelso Sprint and C and T  
8/9 Peebles Duathlon  
22/9 Peebles Sprint and C and T

### **Swims**

8/6 Scurry Swim 250m- 3.8k  
17/8 Loch Tay Go Swim 250m-10k  
31/8 Loch Lomond Go Swim 250m-10k  
14/9 Loch Morlich Go Swim 250m-10k

### **Others to consider?**

24/3 East Fortune Duathlon  
14/4 East Fife- Novice and Sprint  
2/6 Montrose Sprint  
21/7 Forfar Sprint  
27/7 Loch Lomond Beastie- Sprint Cross Tri  
4/8 Irvine Sprint  
1/9 Lochore Off Road- Cross Tri  
29/9 Mid Argyle Sprint

### **Scottish Championships**

6/7 Sprint and Relays – Monikie  
27/7 Aquathlon - Beastie  
18/8 Middle – Aberfeldy  
1/9 Standard- Knockburn  
15/9 Cross Triathlon – Aviemore  
TBC Duathlon – St Andrews

### **National Triathlon Series -NB these are 2023 races and dates!**

23/4 Bishopbriggs Sprint  
21/5 Selkirk Standard  
11/6 Lochore Sprint  
28/6 Balbirnie Duathlon  
16/7 Loch Lomond Aquathlon  
13/8 Nairn Sprint  
20/8 Aberfeldy Middle  
27/8 New Cumnock Super Sprint  
10/9 Wee Beltie- Standard  
24/9 Craggy Island (Day 2) Cross Tri