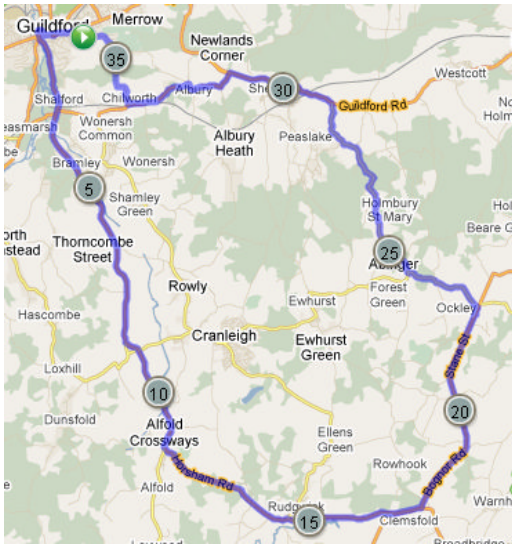




SUNDAY 03 JULY, 2011

# NERVES OF STEEL?

OUTGOING PRESIDENT **RICHARD DAVIES** CHARTS THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF THE INAUGURAL MMX+ SERIES TRIATHLON AT **DORNEY LAKE** FOR THE 2011 STEELMAN TRIATHALON



Saturday: 36 Mile Prologue route

Almost a year to the day since the gargantuan exploits at IRONMAN France, Team MMX (-1) reformed in the tranquil Surrey Hills for the Inaugural MMX+ Series event; the Steelman Triathlon. In stark contrast to the laborious preparations and endless training sessions that had predicated the ferrous metal's endurance event, the Steelman event was embraced by Messers Davies, Foster, Gaunt, Greenleaf and Woonton with a little less emphasis on the race itself!

The 2pm RV for the prologue on Saturday was interpreted loosely by the group which was a sign of how things had changed since the fastidious time management adopted in Nice! Suffice it to say, after the bikes had all been assembled; Steve had realised he had no helmet; Steve had been to buy a new helmet from Giant; and Richard had single-handedly aggrieved a sizeable population of Guildford's Saturday shoppers by blocking their path with a collection of 8 bikes, Team MMX were ready to embark on the Prologue.

Once the busy streets of Guildford town Centre had been negotiated Andy 'Lazy Wasp' Greenleaf powered through to the front of the *Pelaton* and set a steady early pace. The bulk of the first half of the circuit was to take place on a major road which, inevitably, had pros and cons. On the plus, following an A-road meant we worked our way through a steady stream of small villages and hamlets with the commensurate Post-boxes and graveyards which were to provide the foundation for the afternoon's entertainment and in which Leon 'Baptiste' Foster took an early lead in the points competition for the Green Jersey!! On the negative side, however, Martin 'Gasman' Gaunt very much shortened the odds of returning home successfully when he decided to play chicken with oncoming traffic and hug the racing line in spite of the tirade of abuse being directed at the group from overtaking motorists!!!

## ELEVATION (feet)



254 ft  
Start Elev

525.0 ft  
Max Elev

846.0 ft  
Gain



Richard, the incumbent President, was not however able to lead from the front for more than the first mile or so as the workhorse that is the *Gitane* proved recalcitrant and refused to allow him access to the top cog of his gears. It is at times like this that everyone in the group looks to Matt 'the Machine' Kilpin but, alas, the Machine was 30,000ft over the North Sea and *in communicado*!!!

Fortunately, the team managed to amble their way to the picturesque village of Ockley, whose cricket square was set to provide a picturesque backdrop to some liquid refreshment. As the group approached *The Cricketers Arms* however, questions began arising as to why the pub (in such an ideal location) was so empty. On closer inspection it was evident that our hopes of a respite from the beating sun had been cruelly dashed so we re-saddled and continued...



...for approximately 500m before salvation came in the form of *The Inn on the Green*. Several pints of Shandy, some scampi fries (and a conspicuous lime & Soda) later, we were ready to tackle the more serene return leg. Resident cartographer Martin was able to signal the alarm bell as we approached signs for 'Leith Hill' which constitutes the highest point in Surrey but, Steve 'Two Jeans' Woonton had, fortunately sacrificed one pair of

jeans for a G.P.S. on this occasion and we were able to steer clear of what would, undoubtedly, taken a few minutes off our Steelman times!!!

Unperturbed, the group continued but, evidently, had not felt suitably challenged by what was still a protracted climb and hence a breakaway group of Messers 'Leaf, Baptiste, and Gasman set a course for Newlands Corner (the second highest climb in Surrey). As Richard called the group back he spotted an opportunity and made a break from the pack and was rewarded by two back to back tractors which took his challenge for the Green Jersey into what looked like an unsurpassable lead!! As the group cycled along the valley floor with St Martha-on-the-Hill above, Richard decided to make a very quick modification to the route and take advantage of the opportunity to give the group the hill-climb it so desperately sought; St Marth-ON-THE-HILL!!!! A very cruel end to the route, but it was (literally) downhill all the way from the summit to a very well deserved chilled drink.

As Leaf took charge of the BBQ his efforts were recognised with the informal transition of MMX executive power as Richard handed over his Presidency and Andy was sworn in through drinking from the *Col de L'Ecre* Endurance Cup! With the carb loading done and ceremony complete, the MMX box set was cracked open in order to reminisce over last year's epic achievements. This made way for a few rounds of Wipeout with myriad topics including: prime numbers, countries, brands of beer, former prime-ministers and NUAC girls!!! The stage was then set for the Big Fight which it was hoped would get us set in the right frame of mind for the Steelman triathlon the following day. As we all crowded round the TV which was 'showing' the BBC Radio 5 live coverage of the event, thoughts began shifting towards the race and, in the event, most of the team headed towards bed before the outcome had been decided!!

The dulcet tones of two fire alarms chiming in perfect harmony was to be the signal that race day was upon as the President cooked up some bacon and egg baps. With a surprisingly minimal amount of faffing, the group were then ready to hit the road for Dorney Lake!!!



We arrived with over two hours to go before our wave departed so there was plenty of time to scout out the course and the competition. From the Herculean challenge of negotiating a safe passage through 2,500 people in Nice, the prospect of tackling the 70 strong field in our Male Under 30 Category did not seem particularly intimidating. Leaf led from the front in an early breakaway, but all of team MMX made solid progress including the President who sought to banish the nightmares of Nice. The Pink swim caps were obviously someone's idea of a joke at our expense especially as they felt like: 'putting yourself in a massive jonny'!!!



From a crowded transition in which there was a lot of eyeballing and a few friendly smiles amongst MMX brethren, it was on to the bike for 8 laps of Dorney Lake with the challenging prospect of counting your own laps. There were some interesting methods being employed such as having 7 pieces of tape on the frame of the bike and taking one off after each lap, however, for the majority the simple mathematics of lap time were employed to ensure too many/ few laps were avoided. It is uncertain as to whether the President's cranking gear set actually had some hypnotic impact on Baptiste but, shortly after his

Boardman overtook him, he was transformed into a one man exorcist missile who shifted gear and propelled himself through the field. His blue top with a lighting yellow flash a sign of his clear intent to dominate the field and assert the veracity of his claim that 'the run is his domain'. To his credit, on this occasion, he was proved right and a stella performance of just over thirty six minutes for the 10km run took him to within a gnat's whisker of the top 50 overall!!!

With impeccable timing Machine managed to arrive in time to catch the end of the race. *Debutante* Patrick 'Paddy' Bareham achieved a critically acclaimed time of 2h26 claiming the scalp of Ironman veterans Davies and Woonton on his maiden triathlon.



With the full compliment of MMX (+1) The Palmers Arms provided the perfect opportunity to talk over the day's exploits over a hearty pub lunch. It was here that the *Col de L'Ecre* Endurance Cup was also to be awarded to Leon by a 4:2 majority for his decisive performance on the course and was presented the trophy by the outgoing President complete with a refreshing ale inside! Roll on MMX+2! **RD**



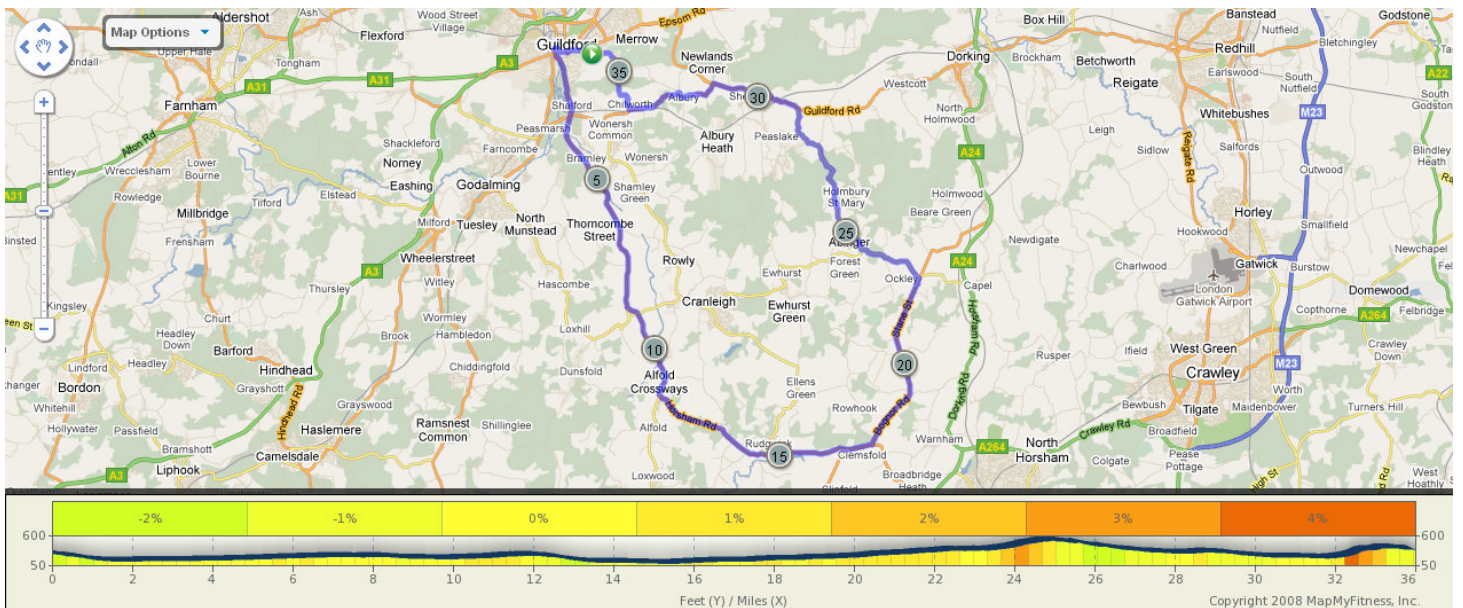


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## OFFICIAL RESULTS

Overall Position	Bib	Firstname	Lastname	Club	Finish Time	Swim Leg Time	T1 Leg Time	Bike Leg Time	T2 Leg Time	Run Leg Time
9	454	Andrew	Greenleaf		02:06:16	00:22:30	00:01:35	01:07:13	00:00:47	00:34:11
51	440	Leon	Foster		02:19:56	00:31:18	00:01:59	01:09:08	00:01:25	00:36:08
80	442	Martin	Gaunt	Serpentine RC	02:24:33	00:27:35	00:03:13	01:13:06	00:01:54	00:38:45
94	414	Patrick	Bareham	Tunbridge Wells Harriers Tri Club	02:26:34	00:30:41	00:02:33	01:10:29	00:01:30	00:41:21
133	451	Richard	Davies		02:29:53	00:31:15	00:02:07	01:12:23	00:01:23	00:42:45
268	449	Steve	Wootton	Thames Valley Triathletes (TVT)	02:44:34	00:28:23	00:03:00	01:20:34	00:01:51	00:50:46

## ROUTE OVERVIEW



## AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

**ANDY GREENLEAF - 9<sup>th</sup> Overall; 3<sup>rd</sup> in wave**  
**LEON FOSTER - Col de L'Ecre Endurance Cup**  
**PADDY BAREHAM - Olympic Triathlon PB**