



‘An amazing day’

by Hannah Deakin

Five years ago, I participated in the first ever Superhero Tri. An accessible triathlon, where ‘anything goes’ and you get to be a superhero for the day! Floats, canoes, inflatables, flippers etc; handcycles, trikes etc and manual wheelchairs, powerchair, walking frames, blades etc are all allowed. There are no restrictions on aids you are allowed to use or what illness/disability you have to whether you fit the criteria. You do not need a classification or have a time limit. It is about inclusion. Participation and having fun, however if you want to take it seriously and competitively you can too! It was an amazing day and experience.

It was so nice to see people with such a range of abilities competing. From some people who you would not have realised had disabilities/ illnesses to others who could barely move a finger. But they were there. Competing. Participating. It was wonderful to see.

I thought it must have been particularly inspiring for parents of young disabled children who may have felt isolated, or on their own previously. It must have shown them they are not alone as well as seeing there are opportunities and inclusive events out there. It was interesting to see the different gadgets and equipment people had and inventions that their friends or family had made.

Dressing up as a superhero is not compulsory however most people did and embraced the experience!

Where Is the Superhero Tri?

The Superhero Tri takes place at Dorney lake, Eton in August. I remember the day well it was a hot day but the wind from the lake made it a comfortable setting.

What Is the Superhero Tri?

The Superhero Tri comprises of three different distances: The sprint -150 metre swim, 3km cycle and 1km push/run; the half- 400m swim, 10km cycle and 2.5km push/run or a full superhero triathlon of 750m swim, 20km cycle and 5km push/run. There is also the celebrity race which different Paralympians including Jonnie Peacock, Sophie Christiansen and Dave Henson to name a few, alongside with their teammates (members of the public who had entered to win a place to participate alongside the celebrities) complete the sprint distance.

You can do the whole triathlon on your own or you can do it as a team and participate in as many parts as you want to. If you do it on your own you have to be disabled (consider yourself to have a disability) and if you do it as a team one person in the team needs to be disabled. If you want to do it on your own but need help you don't need to worry, you are allowed a 'side kick' who is someone you can choose to help you with aspects you need help with. Whether that is the whole event or small parts.

There are volunteers 'side kicks' welcoming you at the registration desk, ready to help people in and out of the water, encouraging you to keep going and congratulating you at the end. The atmosphere was ecstatic. Buzzing. Energetic. Everyone cheered each other on and was supportive. It was easy to make friends as everyone was so sociable and friendly.

The day was well thought out, with everything thought of from a drop off point for equipment to Mobiloo toilets with hoists and changing tables and plenty of free parking.

My experience

I alongside with my Mum, Dad and George, a young man introduced to us by White Lodge, took part as a team dressed as superman- in our capes and masks-raising money for White Lodge Centre. We did the sprint distance. My Dad did the 3km cycle, George did the swim and I wheeled/drove the 1km run in my powerchair with Mum and Dad walking it too.

It was an amazing day and experience.

Hannah x