

Wallingford Triathlon Club

Triathlon Race Report

Chris Jacob

Cardiff triathlon legend race 70.3

Sunday 22nd June 2025

Cardiff Bay



Race Conditions

- Weather: Sunny, Rainy and Windy
- Water Temperature (if applicable): 21 Degrees
- Course Type (flat, hilly, technical, etc.): Flat with some technical bits on the bike



Your Race Summary

- Overall Time (optional): 7:24
- Swim Time: 1:10
- Bike Time: 3:16
- Run Time: 2:39

Cardiff bay is a amazing location for a race. Steeped in history with lots to see and do. The place has an amazing vibe with lots of bars, restaurants and funky hotels.



Swim

This was the hardest part of the race, as always with the swim, nerves kicked in as we entered the water at 5:50am. Not helped as we bobbed up and down in the swell waiting for the start gun. After 2 days of mill pond like conditions the waves were really kicking up.

The swim was a 1.9k horse shoe round the bay. The guy in front of me lost his goggles as he jumped in, his race was over before it even began.

After the gun went off it was the usual washing machine to the first buoy. I managed to keep out of trouble and get into my rhythm quite quickly although I was pleased it was a fresh water bay I got at least one mouth full of water while fighting the waves. The out stretch was very hard as it was battling the tide all the way out and sighting was hard as the buoys are very far apart and there are no landmarks as you are looking out to sea. It was my first time swimming in waves that high and I managed to be able to breath when cresting to make life easier but the tide and waves definitely slowed my progress.

The back stretch seem a lot easier as I was swimming back in with the tide and I had a massive ferris wheel to aim for, what I didn't account for was the current that was dragging me off course as I swam back. This earned a warning from the kayak as I had entered the exclusion zone and added an extra 300m to my swim as I struggled to get back on course.

As I got back on course I sat on the feet of the nearest swimmer to draft them in and make a final push for the line.

Glad I made it through the swim as not everyone that entered the water made it back out under their own steam.

Biggest take away from me was to stick as close as you can to the buoys as that's the shortest route and remember your spare goggles!



Bike

After a quick transition, sun cream applied and a pee, I was happy to be on the bike. It was a flat 10k route from the bay out around Cardiff. 9 laps lay ahead.

I got off to a good start and managed to keep a respectable 30kmh. There were frequent twist and turns with roundabouts and a u-turn half way round. As the sun came out and I started to feel the back of my neck burning! The one bit I missed with the sun cream as I had my lid on while applying it!

Support was great as we rode though town, a real boost! I came upon some back markers that I quickly overtook at the same time as the TV bike came passed, it must have looked good on the TV as the cameraman stayed with me for about a km until I was over taken by the leader of the Olympic that had now joined the route (national qualifying race).

About 4 laps in, again I needed to pee! With an instant DQ if seen urinating in public, I thought about it but I couldn't bring myself to pee on the bike! Then I saw a portaloo at the drinks station but I'd just gone passed it so I steeled myself for another 10k until I could get back to it!

After a quick comfort break I was fully refresh, I topped up my reservoir and got my head down, managed to bang in a couple of 35kmh laps and overtook quite a few people that gave me a massive boost. Until the heavens opened and then I just concentrated on taking it easy

as it was more important to finish in one piece. There were two bad offs that I saw, and at least one guy taken away in an ambulance.

In the end I came in over 40mins quicker than planned!

Nutrition was spot on, I planned a gel or stroop waffle per hour and around half a bottle of tailwind per hour which put me in the right place ready to take on the run.

Run

When I started the run, the heavens opened and I just put my head down and set off. The first lap whizzed by, then after the second I still felt strong. I checked my watch at what I thought was half way only to see I'd done 8k not 10k? After checking with a marshall it was confirmed I needed to do 5 laps not 4! This was a massive blow as I thought I was half way there. From that point, everything became harder, realising I had an extra lap, I had no alternative but to grind it out.

The two things that kept me going were that I never stopped running so was constantly overtaking people and the support from the WTC fam (including Mrs J) cheering me on.

The support from the home crowd was great and I got cheers and clapping every time I passed the town.

Mental Game

The hardest parts were the swim and the run.

The swim was really tough but I was doing it. I just kept telling myself that, yes it's hard but I'm still moving forward and, if I can do it in a lake in Berinsfield, I can do it here.

As for the run, yes, it was hard and, yes, it was slow, but I wasn't going to stop. Just keep running and overtake that next person in front!

Tips for Future Participants

Biggest take always for me were not all gels are created equal. I ended up using Precision PH gels that contain 30g of carbs instead of SIS that have 22g to achieve my tgt intake. Also they are half the size so didn't need an extra belt to carry my nutrition.

Nutrition was key for me, 60g of carbs per hour made up of gels, stroopwaffles and tailwind on the bike and a gel and salt stick every 30 mins/5k on the run.

Also wish I'd studied the map better to find out where all the toilets were before starting the race!

What Would You Do Differently?

We were so excited to be in Cardiff we saw all the sights, went to the castle and visited a number of bars the day before the race. Over 20,000 steps wasn't the best race prep. I woke up with my legs still aching from the day before! Definitely should have had a lazy day!

(Optional) Photos

You can attach any photos you'd like to share from race day!

