



Oxford Family Triathlon *Sunday 14th Sept 2025*

Participants' Pack

Thank you for entering the Oxford Family Triathlon! We hope you and your family will find the event enjoyable, and we are very excited to have you on board.

You and any other members of your group have the same number (which may also contain a star). It is listed on the accompanying timings sheet, along with the time you will start swimming. Since groups are in time order, your start time (when you enter the water) will be **9.10am** + some minutes roughly related to your starting order (note there are no group numbers 41-69!). You will need to drop your bikes about **20-30 mins before** your start time: the bike drop-off point is at Grandpont Nursery School (see "Arrival" overleaf).

If you live locally (Oxford/South Oxford area), I will drop off a "participant pack" containing **(1)** this information document plus a list of starting times **(2)** sticky labels with your number(s), which can be allocated as you like to members of your group, and placed on your top for the running and cycling section; **(3)** a waterproof wrist band for each participant, to allow entry to the pool area, plus one more a spectator or if someone else will be there to look after non-swimming members of your group (more spares will be available when dropping off your bikes in the morning); **(4)** t-shirts (if you have ordered any). If you are not in Oxford, your participant pack should be waiting in an envelope for you at the bike drop off on Sunday morning (unless I have been in touch with you otherwise).

TO BRING

We assume that all participants will bring their own bike (or will be sitting on a bike seat or in a trailer, etc), to drop off at the start of the event. The first section of the course is a swim: you can either arrive in your swimming costumes or change into them using the normal Hinksey Pool changing rooms. If you then wish to change into different clothes for running and cycling, you can do so on the grass or again in the changing rooms. Please bring suitable shoes for running / cycling, noting that most of the running course is on a grassy surface which can be uneven in places. Please also bring your own identifiable water bottles for use on the course: you can leave them at the designated table near the bike drop-off and/or in the table in Dean's Ham meadow.

FAMILIARISATION WITH THE COURSE

The event is not intended to be a race, and there are no timings. All you have to do is complete the course in your own time. It consists of a 200 metre swim in Hinksey Pool, followed by a 1700 metre run in Dean's Ham meadow, followed by a 6.1 km cycle course through Grandpont Nature Park. There is a map available online at <http://triathlon.sofr.org.uk/map.html>.

There will be marshals to help you throughout the course, recognisable in high-visibility bibs (their locations are also on the map). Do note that any under 18s in your family must be within sight of an adult member of your group at all times. However, not all members of one family need complete all parts of the course: there are several families who are participating relay-style, with different people swimming and running. Nevertheless, all children under 18 on the cycle section *must* be accompanied by a responsible adult, in case of emergencies.

If you would like to check out the course in person beforehand, please feel free to contact Yan (contact@sofr.org.uk; 07701031888; 159 Marlborough Road, OX1 4LY) who is happy to show you round the course any time in the week leading up to the event.

ARRIVAL, REGISTRATION AND BIKE RACKING

Bikes must be left at **Grandpont Nursery School car park (OX1 4QH)** before the event. Note, however, that there is *no parking available* at the Nursery School, so you are advised to cycle to the drop-off (please contact the organizer, as above, if you are coming from a long way and require alternative parking arrangements). All participants must check in at Grandpont Nursery School **between 8.45 and 9.20am** (recommended times for each family will be provided on a printed timings sheet). You should aim to arrive at the Nursery School **at least 20 minutes** (ideally half an hour or more if you have very small children) before your pool start time, to allow yourself time to leave bikes, walk to the pool and get changed if necessary: your rough pool start time will be on the enclosed sheet.

When arriving at Grandpont Nursery there will be someone to welcome you and who can provide information about emergency and medical procedures, toilet facilities, and other general. Marshals are also present throughout the course and can answer questions: there is also an emergency contact number on your wristband, should you need it.

In the Nursery car park there will be a sheet on the ground marked with your group name and number. This marks the place where you can stack together the bikes for your group, leaving the sheet on the outermost bike (e.g. under the wheel). If you wish, you also can leave bags for after the event in the family room building - we cannot be responsible for contents, but can keep these in a guarded place within the family room. You can then continue to the outdoor pool: marshals can provide directions if you are not familiar with the area.

GETTING READY ETC.

Triathletes (and supporters with wrist bands) should enter the pool through the **normal pool entrance** at the south of the pool enclosure, and make their way to the large grassy area to the north side of the pool, where there will be marshals. After swimming, you will exit from the pool via the north entrance by the grassy area.

If you haven't been to Hinksey Pool before, marshals can provide instructions; the north entrance is visible from the pedestrian bridge at the south end of Marlborough Road; you can ask marshals there for directions.

Although we cannot assume responsibility for belongings, there will be a guarded area of grass set aside for you to leave towels, shoes, etc, and a marshal present there on arrival. If you have any valuables, you are advised to leave them with a supporter or in the family room. You will be able to return into the pool area to pick up your belongings at the end of the triathlon.

Please note that we may be taking photos (e.g. in the running & cycling sections), but we will always obtain permission from any identifiable people/families in photos before using them in any way.

TOILETS

There are toilets at Hinksey Pool, and a limited number at the Family Room and at the South Oxford Adventure Playgroup (SOAP). Marshals will be able to direct you to any of these when asked. It would be very helpful if you could take children to the loo at home first, so that we minimize use of shared toilets.

Course details

SWIM

Swimming will start and finish at the north end of the deeper section of Hinksey Pool (1.5m depth) The normal rules of the deeper end of Hinksey Pool apply to all swimmers. In particular, any participant who cannot swim one length of 33 metres unaided cannot take part in the swimming section, and will need to be left with a responsible adult. Additionally, children under 8 need to have an adult team member with them in the water (at least one adult per 2 children).

Each group will be allocated one or two swimming lanes, and there are a few extra-wide lanes set aside for families who wish an adult to swim alongside a child. Groups will enter the water at one minute intervals; please advise marshals beforehand if you wish members of your team to start off at the same time, or are doing the swim "relay style", and wish to share the 6 lengths between different members of your group.

We estimate that it will take very roughly 5 minutes for each team to complete the swimming section. The starting order for families, and your expected starting time is on the accompanying sheet: please consult for your own group. Marshals at the pool will also have a copy on the day.

Diving to start is prohibited; please take care when entering the water before starting. Swim marshals will help you to count the 6 lengths of the course, but it is the participant who has the final responsibility for counting their own distance.

Signs will show whether you should swim clockwise or anticlockwise in your lane, and marshals will be on hand to advise. Please be considerate to other triathletes if you need to overtake while swimming, and ensure that you do not bump into oncoming swimmers.

Please take care of slippery surfaces and don't run - remember, this is not a competitive triathlon! Additionally, if you are not swimming, please keep away from the transition area.

It is up to you if you wish to change after swimming, or remain in your swimming kit for the rest of the triathlon (remember, it's not timed!). If you wish to use changing rooms, they are located at the other side of the pool - please don't run to get there!

RUN

All runners should have suitable footwear which can be left in the guarded grassy area by the pool. Please put footwear on before starting to run.

The run starts at the north side of the pool (through the pool rear gate), and cuts immediately through Hinksey Park to the end of Marlborough Road, then left into Dean's Ham meadow. There will be marshals at both ends of the pedestrian bridge and at the entrance to the meadow.

The run consists of just under 3 laps of Dean's Ham: this is a lovely off-road run, but the ground can therefore be a little uneven, so please bear this in mind – the only injuries we have had in the past are twisted ankles on this section. Marshals will be there to remind you of the number of laps you have done, but it is your own responsibility to keep tally. Since all the meadow is visible, Dean's Ham is a good place to allow different members of your team to run "relay style", should they wish not to do all 3 laps.

At the end of the 3 laps, signage and a marshal will direct you to Grandpont Nursery School to collect your bicycles from where you left them.

CYCLE

Cycle helmets must be worn by all participants. Since the cycle course contains trees, bends, etc, **all children must be accompanied by an adult rider** (apologies for repeating this, but it is important!). There may be pedestrians using the cycle paths too. Please be considerate to them, and to other passing cyclists, and always obey the highway code.

Please enter and exit the cycle transition area as signposted, to avoid collisions. Marshals will direct you in to collect your bike, and the exit will be prominently labelled. There is a table for water bottles at this point, and when passing it again on each of the cycle laps.

The cycle section consists of 4 laps, each approximately 1.5 km. Since it is mainly an off-road course, this means it includes sections on different surfaces (a closed section of Whitehouse Road, cycle paths, soil, rough track, and tarmacked lane with speed bumps), so do take care, especially when moving from one surface to another. Signage will warn of the main issues: in particular, note

(a) The sharp left-hand turn at the north-west corner of the nature park (well signed, with a marshal present – but take care not to carry straight on down the slope towards the river)

(b) the rough track beside the railway (signed "uneven surface") where we advised you ride single-file with minimal overtaking, and

(c) the lane from the adventure playground to the Nursery School, with signposted speed bumps, which are quite sharp (please slow down)

If there are residents' cars or emergency vehicles using Whitehouse Road, you may be asked by a marshal to stop cycling while the issue is resolved, and "Cyclists: STOP" signs will be made visible. Please cooperate with all marshals (recognisable by hi-vis bibs) in this respect.

On completion of the 4 laps of the cycling section (well done!), please enter South Oxford Adventure Playground (SOAP) through the main gates on your right coming down the lane, leave your bikes in SOAP against the fence on the right-hand side, next to the football & basketball area. There will be a marshal to keep an eye on your bikes, but you may want to lock them up if you are thinking of staying for a prolonged period.

SOAP will be open for refreshments and certificates, and you can stay and use the play equipment (please supervise your children) etc. until 12.30. To avoid congestion and accidents on leaving, please try to leave by the side gate into the Family Room, rather than the way you came in.

AFTER EVENT GATHERING

- There is the **SOAP summer sizzler event from 11am** at the finish. Do please stay and enjoy the entertainment.
- All participants will be issued with a certificate and light refreshments at the end (e.g. energy bars or similar, or freeze pops if it is hot)
- If possible, if you are leaving SOAP before 12.30pm we request that you leave via the back gate into the family room, to avoid blocking the cycle course.

Note that if supporters wish to wait in SOAP to congratulate the finishers, the lane to SOAP is very narrow, and pedestrians should avoid walking along it while the course is in progress. To get to SOAP, you can walk via the Grandpont Pavilion grounds, or make your way to the Family Room via the Grandpont Nursery School entrance, and gain access to SOAP through the rear garden of the Family Room.

MINOR EMERGENCIES AND MEDICAL SUPPORT

First Aid: The swimming pool has trained first aiders available. Outside the pool areas, first aiders are on hand at all times. If you need first aid, please find the nearest marshal to assist. All marshals on the cycle section and some elsewhere have small first-aid kits for minor scrapes etc. There is also a mobile contact number on your wrist band, should there be any problem locating a marshal.

Lost children: You should ensure that children are accompanied by a responsible adult at all times, so it is unlikely that children will become separated from their group. However, if this happens within the pool, children will be taken to the pool reception. Outside the pool area, a DBS checked marshal will take any lost children to the South Oxford Adventure Playground (SOAP) through the Family Room, where they will be kept under supervision until collected by someone from your team. All marshals will be informed in this eventuality.

MAJOR EMERGENCIES

We have informed the emergency services of this event. If, in an emergency, you feel it necessary to contact them directly, please inform a marshal what you have done, to arrange coordination.

In the event of a major emergency outside the pool, marshals have been briefed on contact numbers and routes out of each area. Please stay with your family and move to an area of safety, following marshal's instructions, or those of the emergency services, as necessary.

CHECKLIST

Every participant should ensure that their bicycle is in a safe and roadworthy condition. We recommend that you check the following prior to the event, preferably in the morning of the event and before leaving your bike in the transition area at Grandpont Nursery School:

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| • Frame | • Seat pillar tight in frame | • Handlebars tight in stem |
| • Wheels in line when straight | • Tightness of saddle fixing itself | • Brakes |
| • For cracks in tubes or lugs | • Handlebars | • We advise that each family have at least 1 bike with a bell |
| • Saddle | • Handlebar stem tight in frame | |

It is recommended that you bring inner tubes/hand pumps/levers etc and can change an inner tube, if needed.

Finally: GOOD LUCK!

Yan, Nicky, and Tamar