

The Krypton Challenge 2008

"An Ironman would be too easy", we convinced ourselves after far too many beers in the Old Dungeon Ghyll.

"What's harder than an Ironman?" we mused.

"Diamondman? ... no that sounds naff"

"What about Superman? ... Hmmmmmm?"

A moment of inspiration, "I've got it, ... Kryptonman!"

We laughed and debated potentially epic formats for this new challenge.

"It definitely can't include swimming", I said, "I'm a crap swimmer ... and canoeing is bad for my back".

"What about liloing?" Dave suggested. It sounded perfect to me. And daft enough. A trial run on lilos on Coniston was followed a few months later by some exhilarating extreme white water liloing down a raging Great Langdale Beck. We were hooked. And as a result, ... the Krypton Challenge was born. (along with Ultra running - Team Krypton and the Kryptonettes)



The inaugural event, on the 2008 May Bank holiday weekend, attracted six intrepid lilotriathletes. Despite invites to the numerous other fell runners on the campsite nobody else appeared to fancy a dip in the cool waters of Coniston. Entrants included race pioneers Dave and Phil, young Rattis Dave and Mark Jackson, and tri-chicks ChrisP and Sue Roberts. The latter two appeared not to be taking things too seriously as Sue had to borrow a bike and Chris turned up with a lilo shaped like a giant lobster – (my attempts at finding a Donald Campbell's Bluebird shaped lilo had come to nought!). The boys, with carbon steeds and racing lilos, were in more competitive mood.

The format: 200 metre out and back lilo race across the shallow end of Coniston; 4 mile bike race on a twisty undulating road; 500m run up and down a hill. Not quite the epic long distance challenge we'd originally envisaged but not bad for starters.



Quite an audience had gathered at the start to cheer us on. "Old Dave" had obviously been practising in secret on the Leeds Liverpool canal as he pulled clear of the field with an impressive butterfly technique. Phil had hoped that buffalo gloves and waterproof socks might give him a propulsive edge but they just filled with water. Some desperate soggy flapping somehow secured him second place just ahead of Mark. "Young Dave", on his misguidedly patriotic stars and stripes lilo, and Sue, were not far behind. Unlike Chris. Her lobster belied its watery conception and wallowed, lobster like, as Chris tried every technique possible to propel it forwards. She tried lying on her tummy, its pink antennae providing a novel chin rest, she tried straddling it and paddling like a canoe, she tried lying on it backwards and kicking her legs. It refused point blank to gain much in the way of forward momentum. Some time later ... Chris finally emerged at the finish, face as pink as the lobster, to tumultuous applause.

The biking was hairy. My choice of course had assumed a quiet road along the backwaters of Coniston so it was something of a shock to find we were sharing it with road traffic full of gawping tourists. With trepidation we hammered round each blind bend, elbows and knees tilted towards tarmac, trying to catch the rider in front. Dave J's tri experience showed as he powered his ultralight machine to the fastest time. Phil managed second place with Mark and Dave M (on a knobby tired mountain bike!) not far behind.

The overall positions were delicately poised for the final event. We ran up the hill and rounded a tree, lungs bursting and legs anaerobically challenged, before sprinting back down to the finish. Our audience cheered Dave J over the line first, Dave M followed with Phil in third. So who had won overall? Amazingly the combined times of the two Daves were exactly the same to the nearest second! The title was therefore awarded to the winner of the main event – the lilo. Old Dave had become **Krypton Man 2008**. He strutted proudly as he received the handsome trophy.

So, the Krypton challenge has been initiated. Next year's event, the day after the Coniston fell race will be even bigger and better so don't forget your cossies and lilos and ... YOU TOO could become **Mr (or Ms) Krypton**.

Captain Krypton - Todmorden Harriers (A lot more than just a running club!)