



Surrey County ASA

Honorary Life Member: Mark Bayliss (Croydon Amphibians)

Mark has always been an all-round sportsman, but with the exceptional ability to be a Jack of all trades and Master of many. Not content with a prestigious junior career in Water Polo where he represented England as a Junior, he competed in swimming, cycling, running and the emergent sport of triathlon. He also wore the GB vest at youth level in Duathlon and Triathlon.

On turning 30 his attention was drawn to longer distances on land and in water. 2007 was the year when water polo players swimming the English Channel seemed to be two a penny. Along with two team-mates from Croydon and Sutton, and one lesser light from Guildford, Mark took to the water in September and returned the fastest time of the group, a very creditable 11 hours 32 minutes. He was part of Croydon Amphibians' Masters Channel Relay in 2011 and has completed solo swims of the 26.4km Lake Zurich Marathon Swim in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

Interspersed among these great swims, Mark also completed two Ironman triathlons, 14 marathons and 19 ultras (triathlons beyond the ironman distances). His versatility and endurance were taken to the extreme test in 2011 when he completed the notorious six day, 251km, Marathon des Sables in the Sahara Desert.

However impressive these feats may have been, none were enough to convince the Surrey Committee to grant him the freedom to drive his sheep outside the Whitgift Centre, so in 2012 Mark took on the Enduroman Arch to Arc challenge.

This comprised an 80 mile run from Marble Arch to Dover, 14 hours' rest before donning his regulation Captain Webb swim gear and once again swimming the Channel, this time in 11 hours 49 minutes. What separates Mark from others in this event is that he was the first and only person to complete the swim section without a wetsuit. Aside from pausing to down a quick glass of Champagne, offered by the owner of the "La Sirene" restaurant at Cap Gris Nez, mark leapt on his bike and cycled to Paris, stopping the clock at 79 hours 39 minutes, some 8 hours' improvement on the previous (wet-suited) World Record.

When not running, cycling or, indeed, swimming from one or other end of the earth to the other, Mark continues to play for Croydon Amphibians in National, Regional and Local Water Polo.

