

# 20 Questions Christine Parkinson

Triathlon Club



**Kit Secretary Christine Parkinson has been a member for 3 years. Here she tells us about her current frustrations, why triathlon is a family affair and what she ends up doing with all her event t-shirts!**

## How did triathlon start for you?

I was having dinner with Pete Overvoorde and we decided we would do a triathlon at Woodhall Spa, because I'd always fancied having a go. He went on and did it, but I called off for another year, and it took me that year and Neil May to persuade me to do one at Southall. It was in September and I swam breaststroke!

## Do you have any superstitions before a race?

No

## How many hours training a week do you do?

At the moment I'm injured so about 3, swimming only. But normally, I would do between 6 and 8, mainly biking and swimming, and trying to avoid running.

## What's the day job?

I've got holiday cottages in north Yorkshire, on the edge of Dalby Forest. I look after 4, 2 of which I own and 2 which I manage.

## What tip would you give to someone starting out in the sport?

Just take it really steady and go and enjoy what you're doing, because everything's a PB. You've also got to know your limitations and just try to work up, improving your stamina and fitness.

## More money to spend on kit means better performances, don't you agree?

Not necessarily, no. I think you can have all the gear but no idea – I've passed people with cone hats and very fast bikes, but they're not actually peddling right.

## Do all the family get involved in triathlon?

Yes, Charles, my eldest son, was junior champion of the club a couple of years ago. Phil, my husband, can't swim but he has done some duathlons. George, my youngest son, also enjoys it. But I suppose none of them are as keen as I am.

## What does the word 'injured' mean to you?

Frustrating, annoying, depressing.

## Where did you go on honeymoon?

We got married in America, in Pensacola on the Alabama/Florida border, so we drove to New Orleans for our honeymoon. We didn't go to get married, we just ended up doing it.

## Why are there more men triathletes than women?

I think it's a question of time. I think if you look at the age groups, there's not that many women in the 30s because people are having babies, families etc. and mums have to keep the families together. Also, it's tough, you've got to be a certain type of



person to do it. I couldn't have done this 10 years ago. When you get to your mid to late 40s, children have grown up or are older. You find that this age group is actually stronger than the younger age group.

## Have you got a favourite event?

The Dambuster, which I've done for a couple of years. It's just well run, well organised, quite tough and it's a nice atmosphere with camping the night before.

## What annoys you most about triathlon?

Struggling to improve. Sometimes you think you've done really well in an event, but then look at the time and realise you've done it a minute slower than the previous year!

## What do you eat on the morning before a race?

Weetabix.

## What's your sweetest Triathlon memory?

Winning the One Step Beyond Midland series a couple of years ago. It's a sprint

distance over 4 events.

## What are you most looking forward to this triathlon season?

Recovering from a back operation and being able to get back on my bike!

*...I've passed people with cone hats and very fast bikes, but they're not actually peddling right.*

## What do you like about where you live?

I like my house and I like the accessibility to the rest of the country and I like the friends I've got here. We've been in North Cave 13 years now.

## What does the Barracuda club mean to you?

I think it's a great way of meeting people who are like minded and allowing you to train with other people if and when you need to.

## What's your strongest part of the race?

Cycling.

## Have you ever read a book which has changed the way you think about life?

What inspired me to cycle was Lance Armstrong's book, It's Not About the Bike, where he had testicular cancer and I just found him incredibly motivating. Having said that, I don't think I've ever read a book which has actually changed my life as such.

## What's the best thing you've ever received in a goodie bag?

They're all a bit bog standard, especially the t-shirts. We have recently had a clear out and I cut them up as dust cloths. I think the best thing is something I can eat straight after a race. Sometimes, I think they could cut the cost down and not bother with goodie bags.