

Report on the Preparation for the 2013 IRC's

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Venue: Various inc. Herne Hill Velodrome, Minet Park Hillingdon

At the IRC 2013 on Saturday I felt very well prepared for the big race due to the carefully planned training sessions that the squad took part in over the summer.

Firstly, there was a change to the way we started the race - unlike any other year, we were to do a pontoon start. As this was completely new most people were a bit nervous about it, but we were given the opportunity to visit Tooting Bec Lido with Jon where we replicated the start many times until we all felt comfortable about doing it. We also practised removing our wetsuits, drafting in an arrow formation, and doing u-turns on the field outside the lido as there is a u-turn on the run course for IRCs.

Another activity which we did in the summer training was cycling in a draft pack – the race was drafting legal. For most of the younger athletes taking part in the event this was their first or one of their first drafting legal races. So, it really helped to practise cycling close to others and learning to be confident and vocal when in a pack, which the group was able to do when we visited Herne Hill Velodrome and the course at Hillingdon. These sessions were also great to help the group get to know each other and become a team.

On race day, everybody was nervous but felt prepared physically and mentally (as a sports psychologist had come to talk to us the week before the race). The team was really supportive of each other on the day and everyone performed to the best of their ability thanks to our training and the support that we got from Jon Horsman, Phil Taylor, and Sheila Horsman – Thank you for everything you did for the team!