**Triathlon England - South West**

**2021 AGM**

**October 2021**

**Technical Officials - South West**

The COVID pandemic and the imposed national local downs resulted in a dramatic reduction of Triathlon events for 2020. However, the easing of the restrictions early this year has allowed more Triathlon events to take place across the South West region. By the end of the 2021 season there’s been 64 British Triathlon registered events across the South West region. Slightly down on the 2019 level but a vast improvement on 2020. We would like to assume and hope that we will see the event calendar continue to grow during the 2022 season.

We endeavour to have a Technical Official in attendance at each of the British Triathlon registered events held across our region. Howerver, given the geographical size and location of the South West region we struggle at times to meet this goal. We particularly struggle to have Technical Officials at all of the events in the very far south of our region.

Over the last few years there’s been a recruitment drive which is now starting to pay dividends, with a number of Technical Officials qualifying at the LTO and RTO level this year.

We currently have 42 members for the South West TO team. Understandable not all are active this year, due to COVID, but we still manage to cover between 85-95% of the events in our region.

Our line up consists of:

1 Continental official (CTO)

5 National officials (NTO)

16 Regional officials (RTO)

13 Local officials (LTO)

7 Trainee Local officials

From an outside perspective the role of the Technical Official is relatively straightforward, we are there to ensure that the race is both safe and fair for all competitors. However, the reality is a little more complex and at times rather more challenging.

The role of a Technical Official is open to all, you don’t have to be a Triathlete, but there are some key requirements.

1. **First and foremost, a TO enjoys a very early morning start**.

The Technical Official is often on-site and hard at work, alongside the event crew, well before the first competitor shows up for registration.

1. **To be gifted with a photographic memory with instant recall.**

It’s the Technical Official that’s deemed to be the font of knowledge, having read the rule book cover to cover and stored away each of the and BTF and ITU rules and regulations, ready to be accessed at a moment’s notice.

1. **Have the patience of a saint**.

To calmly deal with the wonderful competitors who, for some unknown reason, disagrees with the penalty that you have kindly awarded them.

And finally:

1. **Physical endurance.**

As a Technical Official we are on our feet all day, from the very start and often long after the event is closed and the competitors have departed.

And we do all of this as a volunteer.

So why do we do it, I hear you say; Good question.

We all have our own reasons. This could be as simple as contributing to the sport we love, or the feeling of satisfaction of being part of the world of Triathlon.

For me personally?

It’s hugely rewarding, regardless of the nature or grandeur of the event.

Bizarre as it may sound but the Go-Tri and grass roots events can be more rewarding than the Elite events. The level of satisfaction of being part of the Triathlon world as the competitors strive for, reach and often exceed their personal challenge is immense.

Remember, be kind to the Technical Official!