

Finish Line

Meet the characters that make British age-group racing so colourful...



Ben Mitchell, 38, is an engineering manager from Lasswade, near Edinburgh. He's been taking part in triathlon for the past 17 years after he and

his brother decided to enter a local race.

My best tri result was a bronze medal in my age group (35-39) at the 2007 World Sprint Triathlon Championships.

In the days leading up to major race I do a set of specific run intervals.

During a long training session my thoughts often turn to homemade steak pie and a pint.

My first triathlon was run in reverse order so I was just hoping not to get cramp, and not bump into anyone while doing backstroke.

My most embarrassing multisport moment was at my first open-water event – I was still putting my wetsuit on when it started!

The best place to race is anywhere warmer than Scotland.

My sporting hero is Hermann Maier – a great comeback from adversity. [*Legendary skier who recovered from a near fatal car crash in 2001 to win the overall World Cup title in 2004 – Ed.*]

Beyond triathlon, the one thing guaranteed to sap my energy is accompanying my girlfriend to horse shows.

Something not many people know is that I won the Edinburgh Chess Congress in 1992.

In the event of a house fire I'd salvage my CD collection, Armani suit and car keys.

If I could live anywhere it'd be near Munich, where I lived and worked for six months.

While I'm at work I think, 'Isn't the Cervélo P4 ugly?'

An ideal day would include training outdoors in the sunshine interspersed by a delicious meal.

An ideal night out would involve dinner with pleasant company at a top-quality restaurant.

If I won £10million I'd buy a large Georgian mansion with land and then add a 400m running track, 50m pool and a bike track.

In another life I would have been an astronaut.

My greatest fear is being buried alive.

One of my earliest memories is when the stabilisers were taken off my first bike. I wobbled, fell off and was then stung on the knee by a bumble bee!

My luxury item on a desert island would be Kate Moss.

The person I admire the most is Leonardo da Vinci – a genius in so many different fields.

The trait I most deplore in myself is leaving things to the very last minute.



He may prefer hotter climes for racing, but Ben stays true to his roots on the Aberfeldy course

“During a long training session my thoughts often turn to homemade steak pie and a pint”

The trait I most deplore in others is rudeness and bad manners. There's just no need.

My favourite word? When I was a child I went through a phase where everything was, 'Cheapo!'

The guest list at my dream dinner party would read: Boris Johnson, Kate Moss, Haile Gebreselassie, Prince Philip, my girlfriend and Frankie Dettori.

If I could travel back in time I'd head to the Renaissance period.

I'd like my epitaph to read, "He had fun".

Something I do too often is repeating the question I've just been asked. **220**

Treasured Tri Possession

A couple of years ago I replaced my ageing Speedo wetsuit with a new Aquaman Metalcell. The transformation was remarkable. Not being the strongest of swimmers, my suit is a great leveller and allows me to keep up with the stronger swimmers in the club. Although now beginning to show some signs of wear and tear, and despite rather harshly being called a "girlie suit", I don't think I could ever get rid of it.

