

## TWENTY FIVE YEAR TRIATHLON TRADITION

When UVIC Leisure Studies student, Debbie Crossland, asked Wayne Coulson and Team West Coast to help organize The Tin Tot Triathlon in 1987 she didn't realize she was starting a tradition that would become a fixture in the provincial triathlon scene. The only triathlon in Victoria in 1987 was the Sri Chinmoy Triathlon for adults at Elk Lake. Team West Coast was one of a handful of triathlon clubs. Youth triathlons were unknown. In 1989 Debbie graduated from UVIC and Wayne took over organizing the triathlon. "We immediately changed the name to the Victoria Youth Triathlon to attract older participants."



Twenty-five years later the event is going strong, averaging 250 participants each year. The age range is six to seventeen. The young triathletes swim lengths in the McKinnon Pool, bike laps of Ring Road, and run laps on the UVic chip trails. The Victoria Youth Triathlon is part of the Canadian Kids of Steel Program. Distances have been standardized to be achievable by most fit youngsters. Participants all receive a unique triathlon t-shirt and a finisher's medal. Past participants have included international triathlon stars, Kirsten Sweetland and Brent McMahon.

"Several local schools have triathlon teams. Some schools, like St. Andrews, actually have a triathlon programme in their physical education curriculum. We recognize schools with participation plaques. Mark Lancaster from Pacific Swimming and Avila Rhodes from Island Swimming are great supporters of our event. They encourage their swimmers to take on the challenge of the triathlon. Many of our participants are competitive swimmers."

“Rider’s Cycles and Frontrunners have been our sponsors for over two decades. They supply some great prizes and Rider’s Cycles does a bike safety check on all the bikes. Thrifty Foods and Breadstuffs Bakery provide our triathletes with great food and drink. The University of Victoria Athletics and Recreation Department has supplied the facilities since the event began.”

The 2011 Victoria Youth Triathlon takes place on Sunday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, at the University of Victoria.



Entry deadline is May 31<sup>st</sup> to ensure that all participants receive their medal and t-shirt. Entry forms can be found at Frontrunners, Rider’s Cycles, and Breadstuffs, and at most local schools and rec’

centres. Volunteers are always welcome.

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