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|--------------------------------|--------|
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All submissions should be sent to Triathlon BC at [info@tribc.org](mailto:info@tribc.org).

Articles should not exceed 750 words (except with special permission). Spell-check and grammatical proofing are appreciated. Absolutely no vulgar or obscene language will be permitted.

Photos are invited (JPG, TIFF, EPS, PDF).

Triathlon BC retains the right to:

1. Edit articles to fit space requirements;
2. Edit articles for spelling and grammar;
3. Omit material deemed inappropriate by the editorial board.

2019 submission deadline: February 28, 2019

EDITOR’S MESSAGE

So many ways to race and play!

It was fun putting this issue together and learning about the many activities going on in triathlon across the province and country. We cover adventures with Desirae Ridenour and Matt Sharpe who recently competed in the Commonwealth Games in Australia, and look at new styles of racing available to those in BC via Super League and Mixed Relay. (If you don’t know what those are, read on!) We’ve also included a roundup with a few race directors across BC, covering the things they’ve noticed with racers needs and wants, a piece on a new CX race on Vancouver Island, and an update from Triathlon Canada’s new CEO Kim Van Bruggen, who is working with her team to bring forth the vision of One Leaf, Three Sports, No Limits.

Read on, and enjoy your training and racing!

Lara Spence  
Editor



Joe Dixon (left) with athlete Martin Caron. We interviewed three race directors on changes, trends and goals. New formats emerging, new ways to include fun, fitness \*and\* family were noted!

RACE DIRECTOR ROUND UP  
Where are Races in BC and Alberta Headed?

Lara Spence, lara@laraspence.com

We were thrilled to speak to three race directors, gathering geographically diverse perspectives on changes in triathlon of late, and where things are headed in BC and Alberta!

Contributors were:

- **Joe Dixon**, owner of Dynamic Events, an independently owned race production company that stages a five race triathlon series with events in the South Okanagan, Fraser Valley & Vancouver Island
- **James (Jamie) Maxwell**, Race Director Dawson Creek Triathlon, manager Greasy Chains Cycling Club, BC Summer Games coach
- **Stephen Bourdeau**, General Manager of the World Triathlon Series Edmonton.

What are the biggest changes you’ve seen in the last 5 years, in triathlon races?

**JOE:** We’ve seen a few changes to the schedules in BC and Alberta for both Standard and Half Iron races and especially with the move to the end of July date for IMC. We have seen a number of long standing road triathlons such as Nelson, Squamish, Peachland sprint, Prince George, Crescent Beach no longer being produced and others taking a year or two hiatus like the Apple or the Delta triathlon, due to road construction.

With the proliferation of races offering prize money south of the border, I think we are seeing less pros racing events in the middle part of their careers at local events. It’s too bad because pros encourage and inspire and are ambassadors for the sport locally. Also, with so many people

- baby foods squeeze packs, raisins, potatoes, then move onto bars.
- If you’re going to eat aid station food in races such as chips, pretzels, breads, or bagels, practice eating these foods while training as well so as not to upset your stomach.
  - Practice with the drink calories that you will use during races. Every race has a different drink sponsor so if you planning on only using race day products it would be best to train on what they will be using. Otherwise, bring your own drinks and bladder loaded with the fuel that works best for your gut -- one that you have trained with. Some people are sensitive to fructose and get diarrhea or upset stomach from it. If this is the case, try a drink made with glucose and maltodextrin.
  - You will always run at an energy deficit state because you’re burning more calories than stomach can consume during long training day. Runners can burn up to 600-1000cal/hr or more if on a long bike ride.
  - If you get stomach upset, nausea, vomiting, bloating or gas while running and have trouble eating, there is a new carbohydrate product on the market called Maurten. It is maltodextrin and fructose combination that is converted into a hydrogel in the stomach and transports into the intestines where it is absorbed without stomach upset or nausea. A few of my clients have tried this and found it helpful. Because Maurten does not breakdown in the stomach, you can consume more calories per hour using it as your only calorie source.
  - Eat before you’re hungry and drink before you’re thirsty. If you’re waiting to be thirsty or hungry before you consume anything, you are waiting too long. You are already dehydrated when the thirst mechanism kicks in. As well, you are running in a calorie deficit

Protein Power Ball Recipe

Great for training and snacks too

- 3 cups quick oats (not instant)
- 1 cup peanut butter (any nut butter or wow butter will work)
- 1 cup whey, soy or pea protein powder
- ½ cup raisins or cranberries
- ¼ cup chia
- 3 tbsp ground flax powder
- 3 tbsp honey

Combine all ingredients in food processor or mixer. Add water until mixture sticks together. Form into balls and place in Tupperware in fridge or freezer.



after the first hour so eat every 15 minutes to avoid crashing or bonking. Both dehydration and low energy consumption are the top reasons for performance declines in training and on race day.

Post-training meal:

- Within 15 minutes post exercise you want to eat 200-300 calories mostly carbohydrate based with a ratio of 3:1 or 4:1 carbs to protein ratio. E.g. 10g protein and 30-40g carbohydrates.
- Within 30 minutes post training (especially 2hr or more or hard days) you want to have 10-20g protein after the workout to help with muscle recovery.
- Examples of foods: turkey bagels, wraps, baked potato with cheese, bagel and peanut butter, 3 energy balls, pancakes, French toast, yoghurt with granola and banana, milk.

It is also important to be mindful of how you eat the rest of the time as well. You cannot expect your body to perform the way you want if you only eating processed or fast foods. In

my practice, I see most people under consume vegetables and proteins. Try to eat a whole food diet with lean plant or animal based proteins (1 gram /kg body weight), 5-6 servings daily of vegetables, 2 or 3 fruit servings per day, 2 dairy or non-dairy calcium choices, some high fibre whole grains such as bran, chia, hemp, flax, and healthy unsaturated fats 2-3tbsp total/day from oils such as, olive oil, flax, or MCT oils. Healthy fatty foods to include fatty fish like wild salmon or halibut, sardines, avocados, walnuts, almonds. Limit hard margarine, lard, butter and shortening. **Limit sugar** in all forms in foods to avoid health problems. I believe very much in following an anti-inflammatory diet, to avoid and reduce health problems. □

For more information on sport nutrition or if you have clinical/health related issues, contact Tracey at traceyk1@telus.net or 604-785-3039 (call/text). Tracey Mager has been competing in triathlons since 1994 and raced at Ironman Kona in 1997, and World Du championships in Cozumel in 1999.



# Best Training Days: What to Eat, When

Tracey Mager, RD, M.Sc., [traceyk1@telus.net](mailto:traceyk1@telus.net)

Some people are confused about what to eat on a training day, during training, or after training.

Some people maybe take short cuts and don't properly eat after training (this inhibits recovery). For many, the biggest challenge is dealing with tummy troubles on long training days (and race days too). Here are some tips on how to eat properly for training and avoid food-related pain and discomfort.

Overall, your goal should be to consume a healthy whole food diet with a macro ratio of 55% carbohydrates, 25% protein and 20% fat.

## Pre-training meal: at least 2 hours before training (works for racing too!)

- Have 2-3 glasses of water when you get up. Then have your meal. You want your breakfast to be mostly carbohydrate based, because too much protein or fat will slow the absorption. Fruits, oatmeal, low fibre cereal, bagel, waffles, French toast or toast and nut butter are good examples. A small amount of protein (under 10 g) is OK. Best to avoid too much fibre, dairy, protein or fat. Do not overeat.

## During training: After the first hour

- Hydration: water every 15 minutes alternating with sport drink or just water or an electrolyte replacement (e.g. Nuun) each hour maybe more if very hot outside and you sweat a lot.
- Energy: you want to start consuming calories at 1:10 -1:15 into the run. For smaller runners your gut can handle approximately 200 calories /hr, for larger runners up to 250cal/hr. If well practiced at running and eating you may be able to consume up to 300cal/hr.
- You want to calculate calories based on everything you eat and drink in that hour.
- You need to train your gut to run and eat by practicing this every training run. Start by using easy to digest foods like gels, chews, maltodextrin powders, banana,



Photo by Clique Images

now having raced at other events out there such as running or Tough Mudders and so on, athletes want more value for their race dollar, including race schwag and post-race experiences.

**STEPHEN:** The biggest change I've seen in the last five years has been the proliferation of new formats. More relays, super sprints, draft-legal, AG elites, aqua bikes, swim-runs and so on. Many of these are new and inviting formats that make multi sport more appealing to many, especially youth. I've also seen a lot of long-time triathletes moving out of traditional triathlons as they try to find new experiences and challenge themselves in new ways. This is important for race directors as many triathletes get into the sport to challenge themselves personally and physically, so if its the same over and over again, they are going to look elsewhere.

**JAMIE:** I have noticed some race organizers catering to a wider range of training and ability. For example, Great White North (Stoney Plain AB) was a Half Iron Distance race for a long time and now the race organizer is offering a Standard distance and Aquabike. This is good in that beginning racers can experience open water swimming and a big race and not have to sign up and train for a Half. I've been thrilled to notice XTERRA/Cross Triathlon - this new format opportunity thrills me. I've bought a mountain bike and want to try Cross.

## What's the deal with Aquabike?

**JOE:** Our Aquabike numbers have been increasing steadily since we introduced the distance and I believe we offer it at three out of five of our venues at this point. A few triathletes tell me that just can't run like they used to. Aquabike is for athletes that want to race and have a full schedule but know the 21km run off the bike will be too much for the legs. Participants can swim and ride hard and still pick up their training block the following week without needing a lot of recovery.

## Has anything surprised you?

**STEPHEN:** I've been surprised that the sport has not yet seen youth participation grow much over the last 15 years. I don't know the reason either. It may be at a club, race or coach level. In Edmonton, where I live, it is still the same three youth clubs that were around 10 years ago and none of them have grown much at all. I think for any sport, a strong youth system is paramount to feed and grow the participant base.

**JAMIE:** Interesting! I've noticed that Kids of Steel racing is on the rise in the Northeast. Prince George offers a Youth race as a main event, and in the Dawson Creek race, 25% of the athletes have been Youth racers.

**JOE:** I think with that athletes who have raced at some serious events are less likely to race smaller, independent club races than in the "old days" when the calendar was less full which I think is very unfortunate. Many triathletes picking an "A" race and deciding not to race at all elsewhere for the season isn't healthy in my opinion for our sport in future. I'm always surprised to hear athletes bemoan the loss of local races and then when asked when they last volunteered or raced there to support it, they can't remember.

## What participation changes have you seen in Age Groups?

**JOE:** I'm seeing less 19-24 athletes at races like WCOC, Elk Lake and Cultus, but growth in 30+ age groups. Stoked to see Youth numbers out there going strong!

**STEPHEN:** I see many age groups trying out new formats and looking for unique racing experiences.

**JAMIE:** More participation in relays, meaning that families and groups of friends can be part of the triathlon experience at a comfortable level. Among the serious training types, I see more 20-30 year olds and late age groupers (+50) who, like me, have found the training regimen for triathlon to be a health promoting, energizing experience in itself.

## What have you seen changing within the participating populations?

**JOE:** A bit of a shift in distances raced. From raising kids, to helping with aging parents, to trying to just fit it all in, we have seen a rise in shorter distance racing, which had been on the decrease at several events. With the series, we've noticed athletes recognizing each other at different races and having these great race experiences on course and then post-race visiting and making introductions and friendships that translate to homestays and post-race gatherings. Cool to see!

**JAMIE:** I'm helping cultivate interest in local community triathlon. I myself got swept up in Half IM and IM racing 2010-2012, but, a combination of injury and the chance to coach BC Summer Games athletes and meet youth coaches and race organizers led me back to the need for small local community triathlon. I believe they are foundational for our sport. A triathlon in your home community, in a pool you know, on roads and trails that are your own is a low risk event. Community triathlon can be both a positive, rewarding experience at any phase of life and a gateway drug that may lead to more serious pursuit of longer distance events in places further from your home. I have always found triathlon to be filled with an infectious enthusiasm and positivity.

## What "must do's" do you and the team have on the list for 2018, 2020?

**STEPHEN:** As we begin building towards hosting the 2020 Grand Final, we have set a number of priorities and goals. These mostly revolve around building the triathlon community through youth, school and public participation. We'll be focusing on the user experience of our athletes and looking for ways to provide an easy, safe and memorable experience from our event.

(Continued next page)



*JOE:* We’re constantly trying to make the experience better at each event. We’ve signed with Odyssey Medical to make medical coverage even better at each event. We’ve added breakfasts post-race at three races so athletes can eat with their friends and families. This allows us to put even more money into local service groups like the Central Saanich Lions Club that come out at Elk Lake and cook for 600 people on race day.

In Oliver last year we had a beer garden and catered BBQ lunch for athletes and their families, with the first beer on us. It was a huge success! For 2018 we will be having beer and cider available all afternoon. Feedback was good for our privately-labelled Podium Blonde Ale and etched beer glasses. We are looking to add this feature to Cultus Lake as well. Our post-race campground bash at Oliver last year saw a lot of race stories shared, a ton of laughs, and a foolish attempt by a few brave souls to empty the Keg we brought over from the finish.

We plan to add Facebook Live coverage of swim starts and finishes and drone coverage of the swim. We’ve had site photographers taking photos for athletes to download the last three seasons and that has been a success and now we’re looking at having event video shot at a couple races to start this year and have that for athletes to view.

*JAMIE:* Because Dawson Creek hadn’t seen a lot of youth triathlon opportunities, we thought starting a community triathlon that included Youth racing was a good place to start. Our 3rd year in and we are still in the process of building the perfect event. We’d like a larger number of Executive members. Someone needs to learn the details of running our event, for example running the timing system. Our course should accommodate Paratriathletes, and it will be very interesting to attract Para racers to Dawson Creek and work with them to make it happen.

We’ve had site photographers taking photos for athletes to download the last three seasons and that has been a success.

- Joe Dixon

**What do you see as the biggest changes that will occur in racing in BC and Alberta over the next 5 years?**

*JOE:* I think we’re seeing a bit of attrition with some races sold, folding, being taken over by a new organizing committees. Some of these races have had the same core volunteers for 20-30 years, many who really helped grow the sport, but changes are inevitable.

We’re seeing a bit of corporate burn-out for some the Ironman races and athletes choosing to race closer to home, so I think it will be interesting to see if athletes begin to travel to get to races. I think it will be interesting to see what happens with long course racing. I think we might see some changes as to what options are remaining and it will be interesting to see if long course racing ever returns to the Okanagan.

I really encourage people to support independent races, not just because I am an independent race series director, but because I see the risk that the choices on the race calendar will be narrowed down with less participation, which I don’t think is good for triathlon in Western Canada.

*STEPHEN:* I see new format races really becoming popular and providing athletes with a new challenge.

**Two ITU races this summer in Canada - excellent! Is it our good kind weather, good kind people, safe and friendly?**

*STEPHEN:* Canada has always been at the forefront of the triathlon world. The ITU headquarters were here for many years and there are many key players in the international scene that are from Canada. Patrice and Sheila have both given so much to this sport over the years and it is awesome to see triathlon playing a leading role in hosting. When you couple that with our supportive communities, governments, volunteers and dedicated champions, it is no wonder we are able to host so many great international events each year.

**Stephen, what insight can you provide on Edmonton’s selection for WTS? (Course potential, ease to travel to, supporting infrastructure?)**

*STEPHEN:* What you mention is all true. We are so very lucky in triathlon to have such a supportive municipality, province, corporate community and volunteer base to host this event each year. It’s a gift for the sport in our country to have a community like this behind us. All the international races in Canada provide a fantastic opportunity for our athletes to develop, spectate and learn. I have worked for ITU in the past and I know Edmonton is a role model for hosting and it was always the hope to find more “Edmonton’s” out there. We take great pride in hosting this event, making sure our participants have a great experience. □

heavily used just getting through the next 24 hours! The days of “shaking it off and powering through” are fortunately long gone. That leads to delays in recovery and sometimes dangerous secondary injuries. A second injury sustained on top of an incomplete recovery very occasionally blooms into an acute brain swelling which can be fatal. This Second Injury Syndrome (SIS) is rare and catastrophic all at once.

Your health professional will help you figure out a schedule that works for you in the early stages and will keep you away from further harm.

It will look something like this:

- Minimize computer use to short periods of 15 minutes max. Try to stay off your phone.
- Keep to calm environments. Avoid busy social and work situations. Yes, you may need some time off work or you may miss some classes but you will not be sitting at home in the dark for weeks on end.
- Steady pacing of daily activities. Spread the responsibilities throughout the day and rest often.
- Avoid alcohol or other drugs unless prescribed by your physician.
- Light exercise such as walking is usually well tolerated but this doesn’t include running and cycling until symptoms are well settled.

Follow the guidelines of your health professional for increasing physical and mental activity for your best chance at full recovery in the shortest time.

Unfortunately, a percentage of concussion injuries (10-20%) continue on to have lingering symptoms (called Post concussion syndrome) and these have a lot of variables in the mix, so every concussion is truly unique. A careful assessment will include Vision, Eye motions, Balance, Emotional state and a Cognitive/Thinking component.

A successful treatment plan is individualized and based on the results of all these factors.


Every triathlete and cyclist should do a pre-season concussion baseline test as is routinely done for contact sports. The best treatment outcomes are achieved when we know the abilities ahead of a concussion and have pre-injury measurements to compare against. Comprehensive baseline testing is done at West 4<sup>th</sup> Physiotherapy and takes around an hour to complete. It can be covered by extended health benefits. We recommend retesting every 2 years

or annually if you have had a previous significant concussion.

Several therapists at West 4<sup>th</sup> Physiotherapy have undergone extra training in Baseline testing and Post concussion management. Hopefully you don’t need us but if you do Lauren Macauley, Marj Belot and Matt Powell are able to help with recovery if it becomes necessary.

Stay safe everyone, keep the rubber side down and enjoy the season! □


Matt Powell is owner and physiotherapist at West 4th Physiotherapy Clinic, Vancouver BC. See more at west4thphysio.com.



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### Will I know if someone is concussed?

You may not know straight away. The adrenalin of an accident, the shock of a traumatic situation is initially distracting to everyone. If the worst happens and you suspect a concussion in yourself or a friend, take heed of the following signs.

Call for medical attention if:

- There was loss of consciousness, even momentary.
- A change in mental state. Confusion? Irritable? Lack of awareness of the surroundings? Ask them some simple questions. What is the date? What time is it now? Where is our ride going today? They should be able to answer calmly and correctly.
- A severe or increasing headache, double vision and/or deteriorating consciousness are all red flags meaning get medical help quickly.

If a concussion is suspected, then that person **is done for the day**. If in doubt, sit them out.

Either help them home or call their contact (you know you should all have one) and stay on site with them until they are picked up. Remember it's not only the right thing to do, it might be you one day needing the help.

Make sure someone follows up with the injured person that evening and the next day.



## Post Concussion Syndrome

Matt Powell, Dip. Physiotherapy NZ, matt@w4pt.com

Concussion is increasingly in the news and with good reason. Better research methods and wider recognition of the seriousness of this form of brain injury is forcing a major rethink of best practice management.

### What is concussion?

It is a brain injury plain and simple. Impact to, or rapid movement of the head means the brain gets bounced or whipped around inside the vault of the skull. It is a common occurrence in contact sports but is a risk factor in our sports of triathlon and cycling especially as part of an accident.

### What happens?

The velocity and impact cause a traumatic momentary change in brain shape which can stretch and compress brain tissue. Damaged areas have a much harder time performing their usual functions until they recover.

After an accident the helmet may show impact damage, but a concussion can occur even without this. Newer helmet designs use the MIPS system (Multi-Directional Impact Protection System) to help protect from the rotational forces encountered during a fall. They are an excellent advancement in protection (but still no substitute for good decision making! It's not much fun knowing you had the right of way if you are also badly injured).

### The Good News

With proper management after a concussion is confirmed, most cases make significant progress within the first 3 weeks. Recovery of the damaged areas is energy intensive in the brain, so it is important to not push hard either mentally or physically during early recovery. The extra metabolic resources in your amazing brain are already being

## MIXED TEAM RELAY New Olympic Triathlon Discipline 2020

Lara Spence, Editor, lara@laraspence.com

We're covering lots of new race formats in this issue, as well as new directions. A big part of triathlon future will be Mixed Relay!

### What is Mixed Team Relay?

Mixed Team Relay triathlon is racing at its most thrilling, where individual sport blends into team sport. This innovative format, created by the ITU and also known as 4XMixed Relay, comprises of two men and two women each completing a "mini" triathlon before tagging off to a teammate. The relay begins when a teammate completes a 300m swim, 6.6km bike and 1.km run course and then tags off in a female-male-female-male order. Some of the most exciting moments in the race include watching athletes run and dive into the water after being tagged by their previous teammate. There's non-stop speed from start to finish, and the tight back and forth lead changes that often occur are very entertaining.

### First ITU Mixed Relay: 2009

The first ITU Triathlon Mixed Relay World Championships was held in Des Moines, Iowa, USA in 2009. Switzerland won.

In 2013, the World Championships were hosted in Hamburg, Germany, and they've been hosted there ever since. 2018 will be the sixth straight year, and the race occurs July 14+15, 2018.

After the sport was introduced, the format was adopted globally. Mixed Team Relay has been included in the Youth Olympic Games and Commonwealth Games.

### Welcome, Tokyo 2020

In 2017, it was officially announced that Triathlon Mixed Team Relay would make its Olympic debut as an official sport in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.



Desirae Ridenour, checking goggles, at the ready during the April 7, 2018 Mixed Relay at the Commonwealth Games. Desirae moved Canada into 4th during her race. Photo credit: Delly Carr/ITU.

### Canada 4th at Commonwealth Games Mixed Relay April 2018

There was a Mixed Team Relay on April 7, 2018, at the Commonwealth Games in Australia, and Canada finished 4th behind Australia, England and New Zealand (Canada just 7 seconds behind).

In this race, each member of the 4-person female-male-female-male team completed a 250-metre swim, seven-kilometre bike ride and 1.5-kilometre run. Each team member races for about 19 minutes.

Australia won in 1:17:36, then England 1:18:28, then New Zealand one minute behind England.

Canada's Joanna Brown of Carp, Ontario, who won bronze in the women's sprint triathlon earlier in the week, was third out of the water

and fifth at the first handoff. Canada remained fifth after the second leg by Tyler Mislawchuk of Oak Bluff, Man. Desirae Ridenour of Cowichan, B.C., pulled Canada back to fourth but New Zealand's Tayler Reid, who started the final leg with a five second lead, held off Matt Sharpe of Victoria for the bronze.

### Next Mixed Relay in Canada?

One of the next opportunities for Canadians on the high performance pathway to race Mixed Relay are at the CAMTRI Mixed Relay Continental Cup Toronto, Canada's Mixed Relay National Champs, July 22nd, 2018. This is one of many races across the country on the podium pathway, where youth gain draft-legal experience at increasingly competitive levels from regional to national. □





Members of the Local Organizing Committee celebrating the conclusion of 10 day ITU Multisport World Champs in Penticton, 2017.

## Welcoming Everyone Back to Kelowna

Susie Ernsting, MBA, [susie.ernsting@m1sportsmanagement.com](mailto:susie.ernsting@m1sportsmanagement.com)

*Editor's Note: We were thrilled to see the Kelowna Apple return to the BC race calendar for 2018. We reached out to new race directors Susie and Mark Ernsting to find out what they have in store for the event!*

### How did you get involved with Kelowna Apple?

The Kelowna Apple Triathlon Society reached out to us in the fall of 2016 when they were searching for a new Race Director. We started off the conversation discussing our business (M1 Sports Management) and how we support a variety of events across Canada. At the time, I had already committed to being the Race Director for the ITU Multisport World Championships in Penticton that summer which would conflict with the 2017 date of the Apple

Triathlon. The Apple decided to take a year off in order to support the World Championships in Penticton and brought us on to lead the race in 2018. We are thrilled to be working with such a long standing event that has a true passion for the sport.

### Where do you live? How often are you in Kelowna?

We have lived in North Vancouver for the past 11 years after living in the USA. That being said, I travel monthly to Kelowna as we prepare for the Apple Triathlon.

earth people. Super focused, and driven, but still people.

On race day, there was no better spot to be than on Ali'i. On the sea wall looking over the bay, there was a moment of stillness as the crowd held its collective breath, then the cannon sounded, and the historic Kona bay turned into a washing machine as the world's greatest launched the first wave. After the lead swimmers made the turn, it was a quick jog over to the chute where athletes came zooming out of T1, still shedding water and trying to get clipped in. It was especially thrilling to watch Kona rookie Josh Amberger come zooming out first and lead the bike for upwards of 40 miles, wearing his gold Boost Pro helmet. After the stream of athletes coming out of the water subsided, I found my way around the corner to Umekes, the BEST poke on the island, to grab lunch. Then it was a matter of waiting for the world's best to come running down the legendary road. Spectators lined the pavement, stretching out their hands for a high five from Tim Reed, or Andy Potts. The wall outside Uncle Billy's made for a perfect vantage point for photos, catching athletes with expressions ranging from ecstatic, to strained, to determined, all in the final miles. You could hear the roar from the finish line for miles, and it was challenging to make my way through the press of people to see Sarah Crowley cross the line, but well worth it.

One of the most magical experiences I had was the finish line at midnight – people who have literally been moving for 16 hours make their way up the carpet, their final steps urged onward by the fans around them. It's special, uplifting, and overwhelming.

The simple joy and spirit of competition in Kona makes it a special place. But there's a lot of downtime, where you're waiting for the next event, and where you stay is a key part of the Kona experience. Uncle Billy's Kona Hotel was an oasis – the right balance of being in the middle of the action and a peaceful retreat.



Athletes and guests mingle and enjoy the hospitality at Uncle Billy's Kona Bay Hotel.

For anyone looking to experience the heart of Kona, this historic hotel provides a real taste of the island. The staff is friendly and hard working, and they strive to accommodate triathletes and other guests alike. Guests that make reservations for the big week can have their bikes shipped to the hotel, and the hotel has a massive parking lot to accommodate everyone. Beyond race week, those in the know recommend exploring

For anyone looking to experience the heart of Kona, Uncle Billy's historic hotel provides a real taste of the island. The staff is friendly and hard working, striving to accommodate triathletes and other guests alike.

popular food spots like Pine Tree Café and Punaluu Bakery, or getting out onto a deep sea fishing rig, like Bomboy's Toy. In reflection, Ironman is not what makes the island special – it may be what draws thousands of us there every year, but what makes the experience phenomenal is the people.

The 2018 IRONMAN® World Championship is Saturday, October 13th. ☐



# The Kona Experience

## Notes From Uncle Billy's Kona Bay Hotel

Simone Cordery-Cotter,  
Director of Public Relations, Rudy Project



Chris Prater, Ally Prater,  
Brandon Franco at the  
Rudy Project Village at  
Uncle Billy's.

All photos: Rudy North America.

I'll admit, when I began working for Rudy Project, I didn't fully understand the appeal of Kona. People I talked to, athletes and representatives of brands alike, talked about the event like it was the holy grail of triathlon. I didn't go the first year I worked at Rudy Project, so like many fans, I lived vicariously through friends and athletes on social media and watched the NBC broadcast as our very own Heather Jackson, the first American female to podium in over a decade, took third. The thrill of Kona didn't truly hit me until I went in 2017 and saw it for myself, situated at the heart of the action in the Rudy Project Village at Uncle Billy's Kona Bay Hotel on Ali'i Drive.

The first morning was a whole new world, and it was a simple thing to sit on my 4<sup>th</sup> floor balcony and watch everyone go by - triathletes

cruised up and down Ali'i Drive on their bikes, more were running down the sidewalks, people are everywhere even at 7 in the morning (prime training time is bright and early, before the heat sets in). In the protective semi-circle of the Kona Bay Hotel, the Rudy Project Village is a microcosm of triathlon - we select apparel, wetsuit, skincare, and bike brands to display their latest and greatest next to us in our own event venue. Uncle Billy's Kona Bay Hotel is a fixture - the hotel has stood along Ali'i Drive for over 50 years and is a family affair (Uncle Billy himself has since passed on, but his family carries the tradition forward). It's a community fixture; the annual Undie Run makes the final loop through Uncle Billy's driveway, and the final few miles of the marathon come directly in front of the hotel. The week leading up to race day, the front



patio of the hotel turns into a hive of activity - professional athletes come by to talk to sponsors, former world champions stop for a coffee, and everyone turns out to see the latest and greatest from Rudy Project, the number one helmet in Kona. For me personally it was incredible - athletes I had been writing about for a year were flesh and blood, and the beauty of triathlon is that they're down to

### What's your racing / working in racing background?

Mark and I have a long history in event management. Mark runs the H & R Block Pro cycling team, and Mark also organizes the Gastown Grand Prix and a number of other cycling events.

Mark and I also have a long history as athletes and working in sports management. I was a competitive swimmer and spent seven years in the USA racing and coaching, while Mark was a professional cyclist and 10-time National Champion. We met while both working in West Virginia (of all places!) and decided that we both missed Canada and decided to head to North Vancouver where Mark grew up. Mark started the business in 2007 and as the company grew, I joined up full-time in 2012.

We oversee a variety of areas in the sports world from helping companies market their product/services through sport, event management, team management and athlete representation.

Over the past ten years, we have overseen a variety of events across the country, focusing primarily on cycling, triathlon and running events. Some of our bigger projects include overseeing all of BC Superweek (including Gastown Grand Prix) as well as owning/operating the H&R Block Pro Cycling Team.

### Will Mark still do Gastown stuff? How will he manage all these fun projects?

At M1, we excel at building a team for each project we undertake. This allows us to take on many projects each year. Most of these projects take place in the summer months, however they require year long planning in order to execute successfully.



Susie Ernsting (middle, Race Director) with (left) Susan Robinson (Director Special Events) + Cathy Walker (Director of Operations), Members of the ITU World Multisport Local Organizing Committee, Penticton, 2017.

### What are you most excited about / most terrified about?

The Apple Triathlon is an important piece of triathlon history and we are honoured to continue on the success of the event. Over the past 35 years, the event has seen some of the best triathletes in the world race on the streets of Kelowna. For 2018 we are excited to host the Triathlon Canada National Championships and the ITU CAMTRI American Cup. We are happy to welcome back everyone to Kelowna this August.

### Race venue changes? Course changes?

For 2018, we are going retro! For a variety of reason, we were required to make some course changes from the 2016 course and venue. After working with the City of Kelowna and area stakeholders, we are excited to bring the event back to its original venue in the heart of downtown Kelowna. The finish line will be right

on Bernard Ave with a view of the iconic sails and Okanagan Lake just like the inaugural event in 1983. We will have a new courses for both the Saturday and Sunday events that we feel will be challenging and fun for the athletes while also offering them all the best Kelowna has to offer.

### How many people do you expect to race in 2018 in the various race categories?

One of the great mandates of the event is that we offer a race for everyone! Over two days we offer races for kids, youth/juniors, elites, paratriathletes and adults (from beginners to elites). We are on track to host over 1000 athletes from across Canada for this year's event. □

For more information, contact Susie at 604 306 4111. You can follow M1 Sports Management at [www.misportsmanagement.com](http://www.misportsmanagement.com).



## SUPER LEAGUE PENTICTON 2018

# Escape Your Normal

Lara Spence, [lara@laraspence.com](mailto:lara@laraspence.com)



Does the thought of training for and doing a 3.5 hour bike-as-fast-as-you-can-bike segment in a tri or shuffle-running a dozen miles at Ironman-shuffle-pace leave you a bit tired and uninspired?

Then it might be time for Super League!

## What is Super League?

Super League triathlon is the brainchild of Chris McCormack, Michael D'Hulst and Leonid Boguslavsky, three successful businessmen and passionate triathletes who wanted to create something new within triathlon. They thought racers and spectators both could benefit from something shorter, something spicy, something with prize money and followings, like Formula 1.

First two Super League races were Hamilton Island Australia (March 2017) and Jersey Island, England (September 2017). Imagine fit pros zipping through two days of repeated fast and furious 300m swims, 10km bikes and 2km runs in elimination

rounds. It's not about just winning - it's about pacing and strategy to stay safely in position to make it through to the next round. The next obvious question was: "How do we bring Super League to the masses?"

## Super League Penticton 2018

Great news for BC: Penticton is hosting one of only two Super League World Series qualifier races (in the world!) in 2018, and it will have a mass participation age grouper race too.

Michael Brown, most recently director of the ITU Worlds 2017 in Penticton (3600+ athletes attending) and Challenge Penticton, has secured the only Super League qualifier in the Americas. (The other is in Poland). Dates are set for August 17-19, 2018.

Says Michael: "I believe it's time to spice things up. On the age grouper side, triathlons are losing people who end up putting bibs on their chest for other events -- things like Spartan races, Tough Mudders. Athletes in large numbers aren't going to keep

doing the same race with no changes 20+ years in a row."

Super League Penticton will be exciting for age group athletes and pros, and the two groups will enjoy the racing in slightly different configurations. As a bonus, age group athletes can do their race, tidy up, and enjoy two fabulous afternoons of pro racing!

## Pro Race Format

At Super League Penticton, pros will race for four qualifying spots for the Super League World Series of 5 in short, fast-paced elimination races.

A max of 50 men and 50 women will race a 20km closed-course bike time trial on Friday. The race will be held on a 5km closed car race course called Area 27 outside Oliver, BC. "It's the first time a bike race has been held here," says Brown.

Finishing times decide seeding for the start of the race on Saturday (Swim 300m > Run 2.5km > Swim 300m > Bike 16km > Run 2.5km). If an athlete finishes 20 seconds behind Friday's time-trial winner, they'll start

## Welcome to Dodge City

The unofficial epicentre of Vancouver Island trail sports, the rugged hills and verdant rainforest overlooking the Village of Cumberland feature more than 80 kilometres of world-class singletrack ranging from fast and flowy to rugged and gnarly.

Carved primarily through working forest, this trail network is accessible thanks to an innovative partnership between landowners and the community. Until the recent signing of a formal land use agreement, however, the local trails were required to remain a Cumberland state secret. Now that the secret is out, the village plays host to several mountain bike and trail run races each year, as well as an annual adventure race. Cross triathlon, it seems, is the next logical step for this formerly unknown community that's quickly become the talk of the trail across the Pacific Northwest.

Cumberland, which has grown at a rate nearly twice the provincial average since 2011, is suddenly one of the hippest, most chill trail towns in B.C. It's an eclectic community of free-spirited individuals, where the ghosts of long-forgotten coal miners share the streets and alleys with a new generation of fiercely independent Islanders and stoke-chasing urban refugees. Along its quiet thoroughfare, independent boutiques and boisterous pubs jostle for position with funky eateries, a riding-focused hostel and a wildly popular craft brewery. Where the road turns out of town toward Comox Lake, dirt-splattered trucks and rack-laden vehicles crowd the parking lot of the local recreation centre, the favourite access point to Cumberland's version of trail nirvana.

After beginning their journey five kilometres from town on the pebbled shores of Comox Lake, Dodge City X participants will cross the finish line in the heart of Cumberland at "Race Central," conveniently located next to the skate park, BMX course and mountain bike pump track. (What, your community doesn't have a pump track?)



Photos by Sarah Seeds

Post-race festivities are expected to feature music, awards and countless tales from the trails as memories are solidified and new, sweat-forged friendships are ignited. While race volunteers dutifully ferry swim gear and other belongings from T1 at the lake to the finish area, the athletes themselves are simply expected to relish in the best of what Cumberland, BC is all about.

## Birth of a Legend

While the local community in Cumberland and the broader Comox Valley has heartily embraced Dodge City X, it was actually Triathlon BC that planted the original idea for the event.

"We were looking at ways to grow our membership by reaching out to a different clientele, and we started talking about how exciting cross triathlon has become," explains Triathlon BC director and Comox Valley resident Vicki Lundine. "Coming from here, I know how popular mountain biking and trail running are in Cumberland, so I suggested a duathlon. The board essentially said to give it a go, so I took it back to the community."

Last winter, Lundine hosted a meeting with representatives from the Comox Valley's running and triathlon communities, looking for someone to spearhead the event. Although the region's established clubs didn't have the capacity to host an event of this

magnitude, one enthusiastic rookie race director (but avid cross triathlete) decided to rise to the challenge.

That enthusiasm has proven infectious, as Dodge City X has grown from an envisioned duathlon to a full-fledged cross triathlon, with positive buzz and eager anticipation spreading from Cumberland throughout Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland. It's also led to the creation of a new non-profit organization, Steam Donkey Racing, which is organizing the race in partnership with local coaching company PACE Multisport. Net proceeds from the event will be shared with another local organization, the United Riders of Cumberland (UROC), which maintains and manages access to Cumberland's trail network.

Although the Comox Valley has never hosted a cross triathlon event, it's produced well more than its share of world-class cross triathletes. Thanks in large part to the training afforded by Cumberland's hilly, highly technical terrain, the community is home to no fewer than five age-groupers who have represented Canada at world championship cross triathlon events, including Cumberland's own 2016 national champion Clay Ward. At those 2016 National Cross Triathlon Championships, in fact, the Comox Valley "owned the podium," finishing first, second and third in the M30-34 category, first in the F30-34 category and second in the M40-44 division.

For the Comox Valley, then, Dodge City X is an opportunity to showcase its stunning natural assets to a new audience of adventure-seeking, limit-pushing endurance athletes. To visitors, it's a chance to discover some awesome new trails, test their limits and discover the infectious camaraderie of the Island lifestyle.

With so much excitement building around Dodge City X, organizers have just one burning question for triathletes across BC: "Are you ready to get dirty?" ☐

To learn more about Dodge City X and to register, visit [www.dodgecityx.ca](http://www.dodgecityx.ca).





**DODGE CITY X** OFF-ROAD TRIATHLON  
CUMBERLAND, BC

# Canada's Toughest Off-Road Triathlon?

*Vancouver Island braces for Dodge City X*

To some, it's the Village in the Forest; to others, simply "Cumby."

But to those Islanders who crave the mud beneath their shoes, or the intoxicating rush of shredding dirt trails carved out of some of the West Coast's most inviting wilderness, Cumberland, BC is "Dodge City." And this fall, a new cohort of endurance athletes is about to find out just how tough it really is.

On September 9, the "legendary" Village of Cumberland, in the rugged heart of Vancouver Island, will play host to an inaugural event being billed as "Canada's toughest off-road triathlon."

What will it take to cross the Dodge City X finish line? First, participants will have to swim 1.5km through the glacier-fed waters of Comox Lake. Then they'll mountain bike 23km over some of Vancouver Island's gnarliest singletrack before capping it all off with a glute-busting, 9.5km trail run that promises to "separate the truly committed from the woefully unprepared."

A relay option for teams of two or three is also available, as is a roughly half-distance sprint course. (Don't worry; race organizers assure us that the sprint still features plenty of grunty climbs and technical terrain.) The entire standard course features approximately 950m of elevation gain.

While those numbers may not sound particularly daunting for cross triathlon veterans or those who regularly compete in longer distance events, locals attest that Cumberland's rooty,



rocky and highly technical trails require a different yardstick.

"Anyone who's ridden in Cumberland knows that it takes a lot of riding to get 20 kilometres," says local cross triathlete Derek Vinge, who's fresh off a top-10 age group finish at the XTERRA World Championships in Maui. "It's easy to look at the distances and underestimate this race. This is some of the best technical singletrack on the West Coast; there aren't many easy kilometres in Cumberland."

Partly in response to new, boundary-pushing races like Dodge City X, Triathlon BC officially adopted the International Mountain Bike Association's classification system in February, meaning cross triathlon bike

courses will be easily identifiable by green circles (beginner), blue squares (intermediate) or black diamonds (advanced). Dodge City X is classified as an intermediate course; as long as participants aren't absolute beginner mountain bikers, they should enjoy the challenge of the Cumberland trail network.

"Cumberland is a fantastic place to ride and run," effuses Linda Nagle, Triathlon BC's cross triathlon specialist. "It has a fantastic atmosphere and amazing trails, and I highly recommend that people come and check it out. If this is going to be your first off-road race, you're in for a great experience!"

the swim 20 seconds behind the winner on Saturday (Race Day 2).

The 'Equalizer' winner will be the first athlete across the finish line after the completion of the swim-run-swim-bike-run portion on Saturday. Only the first 25 (or half the field) will make the start line Sunday.

The Eliminator (Sunday) consists of three rounds of Swim (3000m) > Bike (6km) > Run (2km) with a 10-minute break (starting when the first finisher is done) between each round. Only the fastest 16 make it to round 2.

After round 2, athletes finishing 11-15th will be eliminated. The overall winner will be the first person across the finishing line of round 3, and the top four male and female athletes receive a golden ticket (accommodation, airfare, race entries) to the 2018-19 Super League Triathlon Championship Series. Races will be Hamilton Island, Jersey UK, and 3 other destinations, which will likely include Dubai and Malta. Rumors have it the series will offer USD \$1.5M in prize money.

Any pro can apply for the race as long as they have a card from their National Federation. Those who have already applied will hear by the end of May. There are also wild card qualifying spots for the World Series.

## Age Group Format

For age groupers at Super League Penticton, the first event is also a Friday Night 20km closed course race track bike time trial.

Saturday: Age group wave starts (100 people) of a Swim 500m > Run 2.5km > Swim 500m > Bike 16km > Run 2.5km race. No elimination.

Sunday is the Enduro Race: it's 2x [Swim 750m - Bike 20km - Run 5km] with wave start times based on the combined performance of Friday and Saturday.

As of March 8, 2018, there are over 500 age groupers registered, and Michael sees this going to 1000 or more. Pricing is offered in tiers, so the sooner you register the better. Race entry includes 3 days of races, a sweet swag bag, a safe, secured course, finisher garment, finisher medal, gourmet food (think turkey bacon club sandwiches and freshly baked muffins) - and, most importantly: a triathlon experience no age groupers have experienced before!



## Unique Aspects of Super League

- Elimination-style racing
- Short races held back to back (it's not a relay; you're doing it over again yourself!)
- Closed course Friday bike time trial at Area 27
- Cool swag: In addition to some great post-race food, racers get: backpack, water bottle, finishers garment, finisher's medal
- Chance to compare times on same course with the pros
- Watch the pros race a fast-paced format while racing for some big money prizes!

"The ethos is 'escape your normal'" says Michael. "Respark your love for triathlon. Have fun with racing. It's three days of age group racing with pro action in the afternoons. Make a weekend of it. This event will be so much more than 'one and done'. We are really looking forward to it." □

To learn more, go to [www.SuperLeagueCanada.com](http://www.SuperLeagueCanada.com) or follow on social media @SuperLeague\_pen, FB: SuperLeaguepenticton. Check out #iamSuperLeague.



In the Pro Race, only the first 25 (or half the field) will make the start line Sunday.



# Van Islanders on Canada's 2018 Commonwealth Games Squad

Vancouver Island athletes Desirae Ridenour and Matt Sharpe represented Canada in the April 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, with Matt finishing 9th and Desirae 17th. We interviewed them in February.



Desirae Ridenour

## When do you leave for the Gold Coast?

DES: After racing WTS Abu Dhabi, we flew directly to the Gold Coast and arrived on March 4th.

MATT: We're currently in Abu Dhabi for the first WTS race of the season. Afterwards we'll fly to Australia to base ourselves on the Gold Coast before the Games in April.

## Where are you training in March?

DES: I'm mostly training in Runaway Bay. However, we have been traveling around for races. I still have the New Plymouth Junior Oceania Championships to race before Commonwealth Games.

## What kind of bike do you ride and have you raced this particular bike before?

DES: I recently got a Trek Madone 9.0 this year. I have raced on it only twice and I absolutely love it!

MATT: I'll be riding a Trek Madone for this season. The design is focused on aerodynamics and we even have a set of aerobars mounted on it. The choice of bike is due to the nature of the Triathlon relay which is a little more unpredictable than a typical race.

Often there can be moments where we have to ride on our own vs. being in a pack and we need to be as fast as possible!

## How many coaches, trainers will come with you as part of triathlon squad to Australia?

DES: I know Jonathan Hall will be there, but otherwise, not sure what coaches and trainers will be supporting us during the Games.

MATT: Many of our squad will be in Australia in the lead up to the games. We'll have about 10 athletes plus our head coach and a massage therapist.

## What do you feel your biggest challenge will be in this race?

DES: I think my biggest challenge will be the swim. I am a strong swimmer and have good front end speed, but struggle in the last half.

MATT: In the individual race, the biggest challenge will be swimming as close as I can to the front to put myself in a good position for the bike and the run. I believe there will be a small group off the front and I'll need to be right there out of the water in order to have a good result. For the relay my biggest challenge will be

executing the little things well like transitions and bike tactics. The race is so short that every second counts!

## What are you most excited about - in the race?

DES: I'm excited to race alongside my teammates. Hopefully, we can all help each other have the best race possible.

MATT: For the individual race I'm most excited about stepping on that start line and really having a go at it. Events like the Commonwealth Games don't happen every year so to have the opportunity to represent Canada on the world stage fills me with a huge amount of pride. For the relay I am confident we are ready to medal and to have that kind of opportunity and pressure really gets me stoked!

## What are you most excited about - for the trip in general?

DES: I'm most excited for representing my country at this level of competition.

## What's New to the SuperSeries 2018?

To maintain its competitive edge in developing athletes, Triathlon BC refines the Series regulations every year. The 2018 SuperSeries will see evolutionary tweaks, largely results of lessons learned from previous seasons.

Included in these revisions is an updated points format, placing heavier weighting on Provincial Championships, and, at the behest of Triathlon Canada, the introduction of an external points structure, allowing athletes to compete in a limited number of provincially sanctioned, single sports (cycling, running, swimming), while earning (limited) points towards the Series Championships.

Liang says: "The adoption of an individual sport point transfer system increases the skills development for BC's young athletes and minimizes the issue of early sport specialization. It also provides families with more

options to explore all the fundamental skills of world class triathletes. Triathlon Canada applauds Triathlon BC's evolving SuperSeries."

To maintain a competitive atmosphere with a critical mass of athletes, the 2018 season will also see the introduction of older, U23 racers to the Series, who will compete alongside Junior athletes. In 2018, the U23 category is a demonstration only category, leading to the U23 Provincial Championships in September. U23 athletes will not collect points towards an overall Series championship in 2018.

Canada's Argon 18 Bicycles, already a force on the UCI ProTour, is putting its weight behind the SuperSeries and our developing athletes by contributing Argon 18 bikes for the overall male and female Junior Series Champions for 2018 and 2019. Argon 18 is also supporting our targeted athletes with special pricing structures.

Prior to racing, all competitors must be draft certified to ensure safety within a peloton environment. Athletes can complete a Triathlon BC hosted drafting accreditation clinic, a 4-hour development clinic lead by certified expert coaches, or have a certified cycling coach in their community sign off indicating the athlete is competent across a number of skills.

## SuperSeries Schedule 2018

Race1 – May 21, North Shore Triathlon (Draft Legal)

Race 2 – June 10, Victoria Youth Triathlon (Draft Legal)

Race 3 – August 18, Kelowna Apple Triathlon (Draft Legal)

Race 4 – September 9, Vernon Kids Triathlon (Draft Legal) - Provincial Junior & U23 Championships.

What started off as a dream is now becoming very real, the possibility of seeing a young, BC-developed Canadian cross the finish line and end up on the top step of the podium come the Paris Games in 2024! □

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## BC SUPERSERIES 2018 WHY, WHAT, WHO

Allan Prazsky, Executive Director, TriathlonBC, [allan@tribc.org](mailto:allan@tribc.org)

Going into its third year, the BC SuperSeries was borne out of need.

Each year, Triathlon BC undergoes a comprehensive review by our funding partners. Because we receive Enhanced Excellence Funding (restricted funding which is used to help develop our young athletes) our athlete performances at the provincial, national and international are put under a microscope. After seeing a gap in technical and physical skills, we launched Project 2024, an umbrella name that includes the BC SuperSeries and embraces performance stream youth development.

The Junior, U23, Elite World Championships and the Olympic Games Triathlon are all draft-legal events, meaning athletes are free to form pelotons and work off the draft of another rider, saving energy and increasing speed.

Triathlon BC's SuperSeries events are also draft legal competitions, providing developing athletes with a unique opportunity to develop the skills necessary for international-caliber racing as they progress through the developmental pipeline and climb through the National Performance Pathway.

### What is Project 2024?

As the name suggests, Project 2024 is intended to land a BC-developed athlete on the start line of the 2024 Olympic Games. A lofty goal to be sure, but one that is becoming increasingly real. Alumni of the Series are already going on to compete internationally for Canada, most recently at the 2018 Commonwealth Games! What's more exciting is the number of prospects emerging from the U15 field -- athletes that may have been introduced to the performance pathway through the BC Summer Games, or are converts from other endurance sports, including swimming and athletics.

"The number of talented athletes competing in the SuperSeries is growing event to event, year on year. It's incredible to see the competition among these racers," says Provincial Coach, Kelly Guest. "I'm continually impressed by their solid work ethic and determination to chase after a dream."

Kelly continues: "The faster, more inclusive format of the SuperSeries has U15 racers competing against more senior athletes, pushing our level of performance higher across all performance groups and creating meaningful, domestic opportunities before moving on to National and International competition."

"Triathlon BC's SuperSeries is a huge step in the right direction for athlete



Athletes in 2017 in the TriathlonBC SuperSeries, gaining draft-legal race experience

development," says Triathlon Canada's High Performance Director, Eugene Liang. "The format and race schedule aligns with what we are seeing at the highest level of competition; inclusion of the Mixed Team Relay at the Olympics, super sprint heats and finals formats and increasing use of smaller footprint race courses that lead to more technical courses are all very positive moves. The SuperSeries will help develop the appropriate skills required for progression through the National Podium Pathway, but also embraces race formats that can attract new athletes and fans to our sport."

In a bid to maximize individual fitness and limit injuries, identified performance athletes recently went through a battery of testing at Burnaby's Fortius Sport & Health, with a follow up round of testing scheduled for late May. The initial assessment camp was overseen by healthcare practitioners and included Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention, Functional Movement Screens, upper and lower body strength testing, in addition to power testing.

MATT: As I said before just being at the Games and having the maple leaf on my back is something I'm super proud of. I've worked exceptionally hard to get to this point and I'm most looking forward to standing on the start line.

**Mixed Team Relay at Tokyo 2020. Thoughts? When is your next mixed relay race? How does your body (and psyche!) handle this shorter distance?**

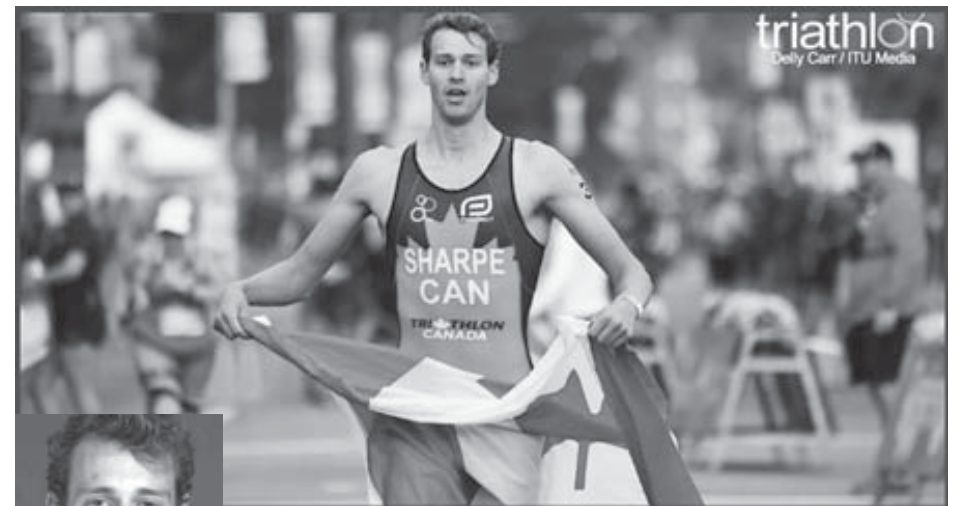
DES: I love mixed relays! They are fast, fun and incorporate a team aspect. I possess front end speed, so these shorter distances play in my favor. I have never raced an Olympic distance triathlon, but when you compare sprint to mixed relay, the crowds are more energetic and basically it is an all out sprint from start to finish.

MATT: I'm a huge fan of the mixed team relay, and I believe it is a great addition to the sport. Triathlon has a history steeped in gender equality and inclusivity, and the mixed team relay is another step in that evolution. We raced a Mixed Relay in Runaway Bay, Australia, then at the Commonwealth Games.

**Super League - I see Desirae you did one last year. Matt? Your thoughts on that format? Any in your 2018 plans?**

DES: Super League was a great learning experience and opportunity to compete against some of the best athletes in the world. It is similar to super sprints, but in this case we had to do them back to back and in mixed formats. I haven't looked too far into the season, but hopefully I will be doing some in the near future.

MATT: There is a different dynamic competing in the relay. You must be so perfect in all aspects, especially transitions. There is also plenty of tactics that come into play based on who is around you and how the race is playing out. It can be super unpredictable. Typically, the people



Matt Sharpe

is super dynamic. Its very spectator friendly!

**What are your plans after Gold Coast?**

DES: After Gold Coast, I plan on heading back to Phoenix for a week, then go back to Victoria to visit friends and family and move into my new place.

MATT: I'd love the chance to race Super League at some point. They've done an exceptional job creating an exciting and compelling Triathlon product. Unfortunately, as of right now, the Penticton Super League event is scheduled on the same weekend as our National Champs. For us to maintain our funding we have to compete at Nationals so there is little to no chance the will be many Canadians on the Super League Penticton start line. My goal is to perform well enough on the global stage to earn a wildcard spot for the next major Super League event.

**Are you in school? What are your plans for May and summer?**

DES: I took this semester off to

who watch the relay have a great time because there can be so many lead changes and the racing

prepare for Commonwealth Games. I plan on being back at UVic in the fall, continuing in my general science program.

MATT: After Gold Coast I'll probably take a bit of a mental health break and then start the build for the second half of the year. Olympic qualifying starts in May and we'll need to be primed for that!

**Any sponsors, shout outs, coaches, we should mention?**

DES: Shout out to my family, teammates, Triathlon Canada, and my coach Jono Hall, as I wouldn't be where I am today without their endless support.

MATT: My personal sponsors are the Running Room and Oak Bay Bicycles here in Victoria. I'm always looking for support, especially as we approach Olympic qualifying.

**Any Social Handles we should follow you on?**

DES:  
FB: [desirae.ridenour](#)  
Insta: [desiraeridenour](#)

MATT:  
FB: [matt.sharpe1](#)  
Insta: [mdsharpe1](#)  
Tw: [mdshrp](#)

For results of the Commonwealth Games triathlon events, see [results.gc2018.com](http://results.gc2018.com).



# New Foundation, New Vision

## Catching up with Triathlon Canada's New CEO, Kim Van Bruggen

Lara Spence, Editor, [lara@laraspence.com](mailto:lara@laraspence.com)

In sports organizations, the period following an Olympics/Paralympics is a good time for program evaluation, changes, and goal setting.

Such was the case for Triathlon Canada: the organization had the opportunity to re-evaluate and also find a new CEO and new high performance director in the period following Rio (fall) 2016.

According to the Triathlon Canada *Year in Review* document: "The organization was at a crossroads – both on the field of play and in the boardroom. It was time to launch a new era for the sport in Canada."

Kim Van Bruggen joined Triathlon Canada in November 2016. Eugene Liang, the new High Performance Director, joined a few weeks prior. I had a chance to speak with Kim recently to find out more about her and what the team had been up to.

Kim saw the job posting in late August. Though she knew she didn't have experience in a sports organization, she did know she has over 20 years' experience as a consultant leading organizations through growth and change, typically with public sector budgets (regional districts, government ministries, etc.) Recalled Kim: "I put my hat in the ring knowing I was a bit of a long shot because I was from outside the sport organization world. It worked out well that the selection team looked positively on the benefit outside vision could bring."

Kim was excited to align work values with a sport she knew and enjoyed. She has completed many triathlons, the first being in 1984 -- the UVic Tin Man. She also rowed at UVic.

### Clear Message, Clear Purpose

Kim took the reins at Triathlon Canada only eight months after the office moved from Ontario to Victoria, BC.

"There had been a lot of change within Triathlon Canada over the previous years, and I knew we couldn't build trust nor athlete performance until we demonstrated organizational excellence at the foundation."

"One of the first things I did was get us proper working phones," she said.

Triathlon Canada also needed a clear and unifying message that would easily convey who they were and why they were there. Working with Taiji Brand Group, Triathlon Canada created a new vision with the tagline: "One Leaf –



"The Tokyo 2020 Olympics will include two triathlon events: the Olympic race we all know, and the new Mixed Team Relay. This relay is new for every country, and it's a great opportunity for Canada to shine."

Three Sports – No Limits!" A new logo and website were released in April 2017.

With Kim working on the organization, Eugene worked on clarifying roles within the high performance side. One of his goals is to provide NextGen athletes across Canada with a clear path to follow to be able to perform. While some provinces had consistent and well-managed development programs in place for identifying young athletes and nurturing them with tactical, physical and mental skills necessary for high performance as adults (BC, Quebec, Ontario), not all did.

Another of Kim's jobs was to ensure that all stakeholders in all provinces understood their roles, and how a National-Provincial relationship would work. She said: "We needed to clearly explain what a national federation is and why we need it - then define the role of the provinces -- and align with them -- so athletes can move up the podium pathway with the funding, coaching and skills they need to compete for Canada."

### Funding to Achieve Goals

Kim and team also worked creatively to get funding to accomplish their important work. In June 2017, Triathlon Canada announced its relationship with 94 Forward, the legacy organization from the Victoria Commonwealth Games. In the agreement, 94 Forward will match Triathlon Canada fundraising until June 2019.

With efforts in funding and within the organization, the new Victoria National Performance Centre was opened in June 2017 with office and training space.

They then began to target other potential partners, funders and sponsors to diversify the financial base so as not to be so dependent on the swings of the Own the Podium funding. This included welcoming new partners such as 2XU, Garneau and Zone3 along with long standing partners such as Zizu and Training Peaks as well as generous individual donors who wish to support the development of the sport.

Triathlon Canada are actively working on a philanthropy and donation program called Fuel the Drive which was launched at the end of March 2018. The goal will be to raise \$200,000 which will be matched dollar for dollar by 94Forward in order to support the high-performance athletes on the Road to Tokyo 2020.

You can read more about 2017 accomplishments at <http://bit.ly/2FgD0Kt>.

### Focusing on the Next Olympics

Kim is very excited about the work to come. "It's an incredibly exciting time to be involved in triathlon," she said. "The Olympics in 2020 in Tokyo will include two triathlon events: the Olympic race we all know, and the new Mixed Team Relay. This relay is new for every country, and it's a great opportunity for Canada to shine. Our National team and NextGen athletes are working toward this." With two events, it is likely Canada will send more athletes to the Games.

### Looking Fierce on the Start Line

As demonstrated on the website, Triathlon Canada exists to support Paralympic, Elite, Developing and Age Group athletes. One of many benefits of the new vision and momentum within the organization that Kim is a part of includes new uniforms for all teams.

On March 6, 2018, Triathlon Canada revealed the designs of their new Elite and Age Group uniforms. New outfits for a new era. The uniforms will be produced by (new) Triathlon Canada partner, 2XU Canada. Their unique look reflects the transformative and powerful properties of First Nations orca, raven and wolf, each animal representing one sport within triathlon. "The concept was inspired by the transformation triathletes experience through a race," said Carey Newman, the Kwagiulth and Coast Salish artist and master carver who designed the suits. On the suits, you will find the face, fins and tail of the orca, and the wings, feathers and claws of the raven. On the chest of each suit is the wolf face and teeth — an imposing and strong statement for athletes chasing down their competitors.

We look forward to seeing more news and progress about many Triathlon Canada initiatives. To learn more, watch for press releases at [Triathloncanada.com](http://Triathloncanada.com) and/or follow them on social media. □

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TRIATHLON  
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2018  
PROVINCIAL SPRINT  
AND LONG COURSE  
CHAMPIONSHIPS



5/20 Westwood Lake Triathlon  
6/2 Wine Country Canada Tri  
6/3 Oliver Half Iron & Aquabike  
8/5 Elk Lake Tri/Du/Aquabike  
9/16 Cultus Lake Triathlon

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