

October 12

## **INTEGRATED TRIATHLON RACE CALENDAR USHERS IN NEW ERA** *Elite Races & Challenge Series Schedule Announced*

Triathlon Australia today announced a 2010 Challenge Series schedule that incorporates a revived elite domestic series and complements the recently launched ITU world championship race in Sydney.

The 2010 series takes in five cities – Geelong, Canberra, Hobart, Sydney and Adelaide – and has been tailored to provide greater continuity within the sport while offering multiple pathways for athletes of all ages and ability. A standard stable of races are offered at each location including Olympic Distance and Sprint Distance triathlons, an Enticer Triathlon for novice competitors and the TRYstars Kids' Triathlon (details on [www.challengeseries.org.au](http://www.challengeseries.org.au) from October 19).

While seven venues were used for last year's inaugural series due to widespread interest in qualifying races for a home world championships, the 2010 series reverts to a five-venue format that dovetails into the Australian-based international races in Mooloolaba and Sydney.

Triathlon Australia chief executive Andrew Hamilton said the 2010 Challenge Series was devised with a whole-of-sport strategy in mind, providing a consistent, high quality series of races for a broad range of the population.

"We've worked with race directors, councils, tourism bodies and our high performance team and state associations to develop a series that considers the sport as a whole," he said. "We had to delay the announcement of the Challenge Series over the last month as a date for Sydney's world championship race was finalised, but triathlon needs an integrated, sustainable approach and that has been our aim in taking the entire race calendar into account.

"Unfortunately, Perth and Brisbane have missed out for next year. City of Perth is a great supporter of triathlon, enabling us to host the Australian Olympic Distance Championships there for the past two years, however, they've experienced significant budget cuts and that affected our ability to stage a major event in Perth in 2010. The Queensland leg was in Redcliffe last year where we did experience some logistical challenges with the course. We plan to revisit the Queensland market, but there is some comfort in knowing the vibrant triathlon community there is already well serviced by a number of established and popular events."

Mr Hamilton said the Challenge Series race schedule had something for everyone.

"The Challenge Series incorporates opportunities for kids, novice athletes, our army of age group racers and a timely, relevant component for our elites – all within a schedule that complements the other big races on the calendar," he said. "It's also important to note that next year's elite series is the platform for a more comprehensive structure that will hopefully attract broadcast and corporate components to help project the sport to the next level."

### **Australian Sports Commission:**

Triathlon Australia is proudly supported by the Australian Sports Commission, the Government body that develops supports and invests in sport at all levels in Australia.

A new three-race elite series incorporates two Challenge Series races – Hobart on February 14 and Sydney on March 7 – along with a Gatorade Queensland Tri Series race at Raby Bay, Qld (*to be confirmed*) on February 28.

National High Performance Director Michael Flynn and AIS Head Coach Shaun Stephens worked closely with Triathlon Australia in devising a new format that ticked a number of boxes.

“We’ve established a cumulative-points series over three races that give our athletes short, intense hit-outs early in the year in preparation for the European-based international season, so we can be assured of exciting, spectator-friendly racing,” Mr Flynn said.

“We’ve moved away from the traditional Australian championships across the Olympic and Sprint distances to more suitable formats such as Enduro and Triple Sprint, which is a big change for the sport, but our focus has to be on readying our elite athletes to shine on the international stage.”

Elite competitors will commence serious competition with the domestic series in readiness for the Mooloolaba ITU World Cup (March 27-28) and the opening race of the Dextro Energy ITU World Championship Series in Sydney on April 11 that sees a spectacular course based at the Sydney Opera House, similar to the 2000 Olympic Games.

For age group racing enthusiasts, Adelaide is the new host of the Australian Olympic Distance and Sprint Championships, following tenures in Perth and Hobart respectively. Adelaide will also host the Australian Duathlon Championships.

### ***Challenge Series & ITU Race Calendar following***

***The 2010 Challenge Series website [www.challengeseries.org.au](http://www.challengeseries.org.au) will launch on October 19***

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## **2010 CHALLENGE SERIES & ITU RACE CALENDAR**

<b>GEELONG CHALLENGE</b> Sprint, OD, Enticer & TRYstars	North Shore	January 16-17
<b>CANBERRA CHALLENGE</b> Sprint, OD, Enticer & TRYstars 2XU Australian Junior Series: Race 2#	Commonwealth Park	January 23-24
<b>HOBART CHALLENGE</b> Sprint, OD, Enticer & TRYstars National Elite Series: Race 1* 2XU Australian Junior Series: Race 3#	Waterman's Dock	February 13-14
<b>SYDNEY CHALLENGE</b> Sprint, OD, Enticer, TRYstars National Elite Series: Race 3*	Cronulla	March 6-7
<b>ADELAIDE CHALLENGE</b> Sprint, OD, Enticer & TRYstars Australian Age Group Sprint & OD Championships Australian Duathlon Championships	Glenelg	March 20-21
<b>ITU WORLD CUP</b> Run, Ocean Swim, OD, Superkidz, Cycling Grand Prix, Individual Elite	Mooloolaba	March 26-28
<b>ITU WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP</b> Individual Elite	Sydney Harbour	April 11

*\*Race 2 of the National Elite Series is a Gatorade Qld Tri Series race, Raby Bay, February 28 (TBC)*

*#Race 1 of the 2XU Australian Junior Series is Supersprint Race Weekend, Gold Coast, Dec 11-13*

*#Race 4 of the 2XU Australian Junior Series is ITU Oceania Champs, Wellington ,NZ, March 13*

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