

## **WOMEN'S TRIATHLON EVENT GRANT**

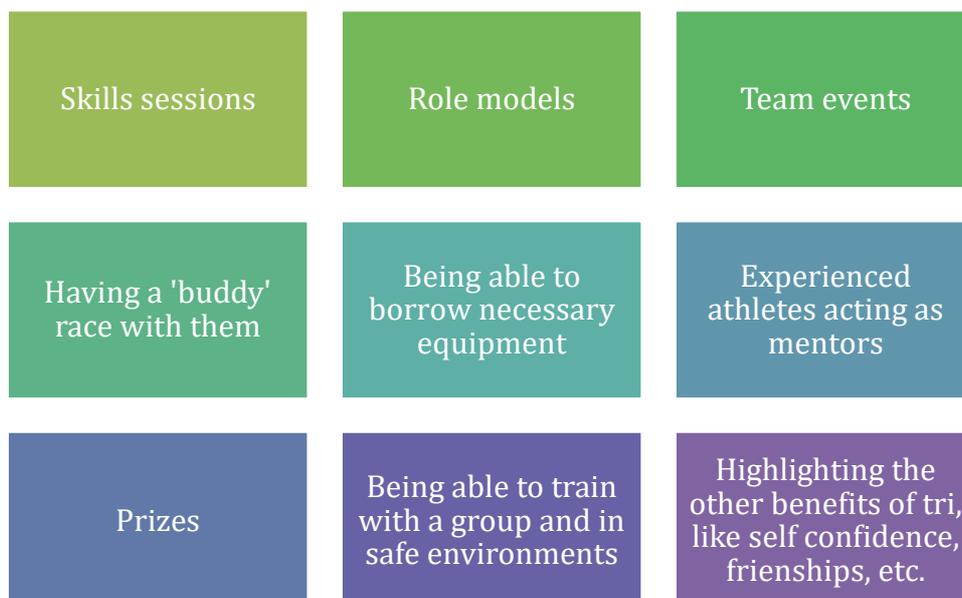
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### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In August this year, we conducted a survey of 150 female members about their experience in triathlon.

The results of this survey indicate the following:

- An overwhelming majority said that 'personal challenge' is what they enjoy most about triathlon, followed by 'keeping fit and healthy'.
- 61% said seminars/workshops or skills sessions could encourage women to take part in triathlon, followed by race-day 'chaperones' for newbies and social events, e.g. women's rides.
- Women's only training, women's only start waves or races, shorter length events and prizes were all strongly supported by respondents.
- The preferred triathlon distance is a sprint or shorter.
- For young women in particular, the barriers identified were: the expense of the sport, lack of available equipment (i.e. bike), the perception of the sport as being male-dominated & a lack of women's training groups.
- When asked 'What could encourage younger women to try triathlon?', the following were listed:



## **EVENT SUGGESTIONS – BASED ON MEMBER SURVEY**

- Not having male waves start after female waves – there is a dislike/fear of men swimming over the top.
- Avoiding a late morning start if possible (due to summer heat, time commitments, etc).
- Potential for rolling swim starts rather than mass starts, as women may feel more comfortable selecting when and how they start their swim.
- Adequate change rooms & bathrooms.
- Having a bike check station if possible, and encouraging participants to use any bike they have, rather than feeling like they need a road bike.
- Friendly volunteers in transition who are willing to help out and show someone the ropes.
- Potential for team entries or ‘non-swim’ entries.
- An atmosphere of support & encouragement is important – especially later in the event and for ‘last finishers’ – and ensuring equipment is not packed up early, as this can be very disheartening.
- Have a ‘first timers’ briefing so that any newbies can ask questions and ease their nerves.

## **CASE STUDY: ORANGE TRI CLUB - SANDI OSTINI LADIES COLOUR TRIATHLON**

Orange Triathlon Club have run a women’s triathlon for a number of years, in memory of a former member who has passed away. The key features of this event are:

- Very low entry fee, subsidised by the club.
- ‘Anything goes’ environment – swimming with fins or a pool noodle is okay, any type of bike is permitted, teams entries are allowed, entrants can skip the swim if they want.
- Entrants are encouraged to wear bright, colourful clothing & accessories – many existing members from the club join in and have fun with this on the day.
- Experienced triathletes and other club members came out on the day to help newbies and ran a ‘bike check’ tent for any bike maintenance issues.

- The event was in the afternoon, which allowed for families to go to Saturday sport in the morning, and it was followed by social drinks & snacks.
- The event was not timed, and every entrant went into the running for prizes from local businesses and club sponsors, e.g. massage vouchers, beauty gift packs.

This event highlights the importance of having a low key, supportive atmosphere for first-timers, with the emphasis on eliminating or accounting for potential barriers (e.g. fear of open water swimming) and encouraging participation and having fun.

### **CASE STUDY: BATHURST TRI CLUB – WOMEN’S TRI**

Bathurst have run a successful women’s triathlon for the past two years that incorporates an 8-12 week training program before the event. In 2019, this program was sponsored by a local gym, which hosted a number of weekly paid training sessions for the women who had signed up. The goal of the race is to give women the confidence to participate in triathlon in a supportive event, which then encourages them to continue to take part in the club. This women’s tri has resulted in greater female participation at regular club races.

- The event is on a Sunday morning with a slighter later start than normal club races, and is followed by a morning tea which supports local businesses.
- The event has a roving bike mechanic, who is able to attend to any mechanical issues during the race.
- The event has a proportionally shorter pool swim of 200m, followed by a 16km ride and 2.5km run.
- There is a rolling swim start instead of mass start – weaker swimmers tend to go first, and anyone can use a noodle or flippers to complete the swim.
- There is no fee for participants to enter, but the club also collects money for charity at the point of registration.
- Club costs for the event include pool hire, traffic control, catering and water bottles for participants.
- The club uses social media to promote weekly triathlon tips for first-timers, e.g. one week focusing on transition, the next week focusing on the swim leg, and also hosted information sessions prior to the event.