

President's Message – 2024

A SEASON OF STARTING LINES

The 2023-2024 triathlon season was filled with great racing, in beautiful locations, and (mostly) sunny skies and calm water. Across Tasmania we had 21 start line opportunities, including **Event of the Year Bridport Triathlon**, the Schools Triathlon Challenges and the Devonport Triathlon. I loved being able to race across our beautiful state – from being part of a corporate team at Seven Mile Beach (the bike), mixing it up with a draft legal pre-race at the Symmons Plains duathlon, to the double day at glorious Greens Beach, and being part of the age-group racing at the Devonport Triathlon. It was incredibly exciting and inspirational to see the elite and paratriathletes race. And much sunnier than spectating at the Ironman Tas 70.3 – kudos to those embracing the elements that day!

All the thank yous

I would like to thank all the race directors, technical officials, volunteers, coaches, club committee members, competitors and supporters who have contributed to making this such a great season. I am very proud and thankful of the dedication of all these volunteers to deliver great triathlon seasons year after year.

All the hard work of our volunteers is reflected in our record membership numbers – exactly 305 members for the second year in a row! Participation in our State Championships Series increased with 471 participants in the 2023-2024 season, an increase of 48% from the 317 participants in the 2022-2023 season. We had a total of 8001 participants across the season, including the 6003 kids who participated in the Schools Triathlon Challenge (yes we are working on initiatives for kids). Thank you to everyone who showed up to race, support family or friends who were racing, or volunteered at a race.

AusTriathlon – national governance

We are now two years post transition into the AusTriathlon operating model. Triathlon Tasmania commenced its new operating structure with Triathlon Australia in July 2022 and four other states and territories (NT, Qld, SA, and Vic). There are huge benefits to Tasmania through centralised administration, finance and accounting, marketing and communications. The Tasmanian Board has worked with AusTriathlon during this two year period to make sure benefits to our members and clubs were realised.

Overarching governance benefits include a clear national strategy, a supported and collaborative national working environment for staff, clear roles and responsibilities, and more efficient use of funds and time.

AusTriathlon's current strategic goals include:

- A sport for everyone
- Winning well to inspire
- Working in harmony

Read more about the [national strategic plan here](#). For the TasTriathlon board, our focus under these strategic pillars has been promoting and developing the sport of triathlon in Tasmania with our stakeholders, delivering a high quality state series, supporting clubs to continue to build their communities and event participation, and helping members to make the most of their AusTriathlon membership.

TASTRIATHLON – LOCAL FOCUS

The TasTriathlon board's role has evolved under the AusTriathlon model and is now less operational and more strategic, including oversight of AusTriathlon's performance, contributing to the national strategy, and election of AusTriathlon board members. Our decisions are always within the context of what is best for the sport in Tasmania and our members.

As always, I ask you to provide feedback on what issues you, as a member, would like to see TasTriathlon keep doing, improve, or develop.

One of the highlights for me was the (refreshingly early) Awards breakfast – what a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our State Champions and acknowledge the achievements of individuals and clubs. Congratulations to our Award winners:

- State Championship Series: Aurora de Boer and Sam Marshall
- The Athlete's Athlete: Danika Bumford
- Most Inspiring Performance – No Limits Award: Shaun Mulloy
- Coach of the Year: Peter McKenna
- Technical Official of the Year: Peter Adams
- Club Initiative of the Years: Launceston Triathlon Club for junior development
- Volunteer of the Year: Di Webb
- Youth/Junior Athlete of the Year – Fairbrother Award: Jack Woodberry
- Youth/Junior Most Improved – Fairbrother Award: Ruby Statton and Hunter Dean
- Hall of Fame: Craig Redman

This year our awards were aligned with the national awards. I was so pleased to be able to present Jack Latham (and family!) the inaugural Presidents Special Recognition Award for his fantastic achievements, including:

- 2023 Olympic Esport World Duathlon Champion
- 2023 Commonwealth Youth Games – bronze; Mixed Relay – gold
- 2024 Oceania Triathlon Junior Championship – 4th; Mixed Relay - 2nd

Another outstanding award winner was William Blackaby who received the Tasmanian Young Achiever *Raw Strength Sports in the Community Award* – recognising his journey from childhood achievements in triathlon to a successful Race Director career and his award winning business, Tri Events Tasmania. Congratulations, Will.

Tas Triathlon Team

As part of AusTriathlon we have dedicated and enthusiastic staff across the country to support triathlon in Tasmania – a special thank you to Alex Anasson, General Manager of Sport Services, and Leah Mercuri, Finance for joining our Board meetings. A big thank you to Shellie Casalegno, our Tasmania-based State Services Manager, for her commitment to our sport and how she has embraced a national approach.

In the past year we have farewelled Abbey Fairbrother from the Board. Abbey was a member of the Board for nearly three years and we valued the cross-sport experience she brought from surf life saving. While we said goodbye to Abbey, we were delighted to welcome Georgie Shepherd to the Board and look forward to adding her business and analytical skills (and race dominance!) to our skills matrix.

As for most people involved in triathlon, my director colleagues volunteer their time and expertise and I am very grateful for the support of Casey, Errol, Jane, Gabe and Georgie.

Our 2024-2025 season has already started with the ever popular, getting race fit duathlons. The [race calendar](#) is filled with an exciting range of events and distances – I can't wait to see you at training or on one of this season's starting lines.

Melissa Snadden