

2020 National Race Director Summit

The global pandemic has dramatically changed the landscape of the event marketplace in Canada and around the world. Many of these changes are solidifying into permanent fixtures for the foreseeable future. In partnership with and building on the amazing work of Triathlon BC and Triathlon Alberta, we are teaming up to offer a special COVID-19 oriented National Race Directors Conference over the weekend of November 28 & 29.

This will be a free conference open to any and all who would like to attend with the goal of bringing together race organizers from across Canada to share on relevant topics as we prepare to hit the start line in 2021.

The conference will be hosted virtually on the Zoom platform. Recognizing the challenges of virtual conferences, the sessions have been spread over two days with a 3.5 hour block each day to maximize focus and engagement. Each topic will be facilitated by an industry expert aimed at all events, regardless of budget or participation rates, and offer attendees sufficient time for questions and answers. All sessions will be done in English, but a translator will be available to assist with questions in French.

“Understanding the challenges and hardships associated with the 2020 season, where over 97% of our provincially sanctioned events were canceled, Triathlon BC remains hopeful that the 2021 season will see a modified race calendar return,” said Allan Prazsky, Triathlon BC, Executive Director. “It’s our intent to keep Race Directors from across BC (and Canada) informed of best practices, allowing for the safest return to sport possible.”

Join us! Register to receive the conference log-in details.

[REGISTER](#)



AGENDA – DAY 1

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2020	
8:30 – 8:40AM Introductions / Welcome / Connections – Steve Fleck	
8:40 – 9:00AM	Keynote: Inclusion, Diversity & Representation – Carey Newman – Hayalthkin'geme Carey has a special connection with triathlon – both as an age group triathlete in training and as the artist behind the design of the current Team Canada uniforms. Drawing on his knowledge of the sport, and his commitment to reconciliation, Carey created a design to bring together the elements of swim, bike and run expressed through the art forms of his First Nations heritage. The team uniforms sparked a national conversation around diversity and inclusion. Carey will share some of the key learnings from this experience and his extensive work as both an artist and advocate.
9:00 – 9:35AM	COVID-19 and its Impact on the Endurance Marketplace – Gary Roethenbaugh An overview of research into athlete motivations during the current Covid-19 crisis. The presentation will give an overview of a study undertaken by MultiSport Research. It covers data for June 2020, and updates a previous survey of athletes undertaken in April 2020. The presentation session will explore areas such as: levels of athlete concern about Covid-19; attitudes to training & rescheduled events; views on race cancellations, a safe return to racing, increased fees & travel; attitudes to virtual racing; and gear expenditure.
9:40 – 10:15AM	Return to Sport Swim Safety – Tim Dale As we look toward 2021, and the return to racing, the importance of 'Swim Safety' will be paramount as participants return to pool and open water competition after a prolonged hiatus across Canada. This presentation will highlight the importance of risk mitigation, the increase of SIPE (Swimming-Induced Pulmonary Edema) at events and review best practices and guidelines to ensure future events are hosted in a safe environment.
10:15 – 11:20AM Break / Networking	
10:20 – 10:45AM	New Event Formats – Ghislain Mélançon / Éric Noël World Triathlon Montreal is getting set to host the 2022 World Triathlon Sprint & Relay Championships. In preparation, the operations team is about to trial some new formats as part of their 2021 program. Short and fast is the new name of the game as Super Sprint and Mixed Relay events come to the forefront. Ghislain and Eric will speak to these new formats in terms of benefits and challenges in the new world of pandemic requirements and the work they are doing to introduce and engage the Age Group community with short course, small footprint racing.
10:45 – 11:20AM	Racing at Home Narrative & Staying Ready – Chris Dornan The second wave of the pandemic has officially hit Canada, proving to us all that covid-19 has not run its course. Talk of vaccines is starting to spark hope for 2021, but the reality as we head into the winter sport season is still one of heightening restrictions and reduced contact. Chris works with many sports as a communications expert and will share his experiences with triathlon throughout the 2020 season as well as a variety of other sports as we turn our focus to 2021 and a strong narrative of staying local, staying safe.
11:20 – 11:45AM	Virtual Racing with FulGaz – Mike Clucas The global pandemic has skyrocketed virtual racing to the forefront, and there is a great deal of potential for race organizers in this space. Triathlon Canada and FulGaz partnered up during the 2020 shut-down to offer virtual racing opportunities to Canadians. This session will cover the FulGaz platform – what virtual events look like, outline the work FulGaz is currently doing and provide insight into how rides look within the app. It will also provide information on how to create the best content and get the most out of your virtual event, the process for submitting rides, timelines for processing and how to show off your race.
11:45 – 12:05PM Round table: Provincial & National Updates Q&A – Steve Fleck Panel – Allan Prazsky, Triathlon BC; Sebastian Porten, Triathlon Alberta; Kim Van Bruggen, Triathlon Canada	

AGENDA – DAY 2

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2020	
8:30 – 8:40AM Introductions / Welcome / Connections – Steve Fleck	
8:40 – 9:00AM	Keynote: Inclusion & Diversity – Rach McBride Rach is the first professional triathlete to be out as gender non-binary. They hold two graduate degrees in genetics and are an accomplished cellist, having toured the US and performed in Europe with various bands. Rach loves being a minimalist, spinning fire, and working in sexual health education and advocacy in beautiful Vancouver, Canada, where they live and train.
9:00 – 9:30AM	Triathlon in Pandemic Times & Beyond – Dr. Marie-Claude Gregoire The current pandemic has impacted the world of sport in more ways that we could imagine. To keep going, we are forced to redefine our safety protocols, our policies and even the fundamentals of course design and technical rules. As we plan our return to training and competition, we can expect a need for frequent review and adaptation in response to the constant influx of new scientific data. In the session, we will review how infection transmission can be mitigated, to allow for a safe practice of triathlon and other multisport activities.
9:30 – 10:00AM	Critical Incident Communications – Jonathan Gormick In spite of all the preparation in the world, incidents raging from athlete crashes to technology crashes, and from benign to malicious can drastically shift a race director's focus. Planning and practicing for such events is the difference between managing the issue smoothly and the proverbial wheels falling off. Media are an integral and important mechanism for communication, however they work under extreme pressure to gather information, and ideally information their competitors do not have. Without a plan to coordinate information release following an incident, a race director will likely find media contacting anyone and everyone associated with the event, and information being published that ranges from accurate to absurd. Having a contingency plan to coordinate information release, balancing pro-activity with pause, and knowing what information is helpful and lawful to release should be part of every race director's race-day toolbox.
10:00 – 10:30AM	Waivers, Attestations & Insurance – Steve Indig The information presented will focus on risk management, the understanding of negligence and risk mitigation strategies. Participants will learn about the legal test relating to negligence, understanding standard of care and the use of waivers and other risk management techniques.
10:30 – 10:35AM Break / Networking	
10:35 – 11:05AM	World Championship Qualification Spots – Rachel Macatee The Age Group World Championship Qualification program has changed significantly over the past 4 years. It is a complex program that can provide real benefit to race organizers. This session will help educate on how the qualification program works and how best to leverage hosting spots.
11:05 – 11:35AM	NTRS Event & Activity Registration; What is New for 2021? – Phil Mowatt 2020 left a mark in many ways including an impact on event registrants and organizers. Event cancellations, refunds, chargebacks, registration credits/deferrals and merchandise fulfillment challenges like never seen before, these brought all kinds of new challenges with additional costs, mountains of administration and communication. We enter the 2021 season with new partners, adapted processes and evolved technology based on the lessons of 2020. Phil will host an information session and Q&A about what is new for the NTRS that will help by protecting registrants and event organizers around refunds, abolishing refund fees, next day payouts, better chargeback controls and touchless merchandise that is directly shipped to registrants.
11:35 – 12:00PM	Brand-building in a time of crisis and change – Caroll Taiji These are precarious times in the world of sport. Building connection and relevance with your sport community amid waves of uncertainty is extremely challenging. Our lives have fundamentally changed and so has the playbook for brand-building. People expect their brands to deliver more value and be an active contributor to a better world. This is no time for radio silence. This is the time to align your purpose with your actions; to provide meaningful benefits, to clean house on issues like gender equity, racial discrimination and athlete safety, and to share stories that instill hope and optimism. Learn about how regenerative branding helps sport be a catalyst for social change. And, learn how you can help strengthen One Triathlon Canada Nation.
12:00 – 12:15PM Connected Closure – Steve Fleck	



Steve Fleck - Master of Ceremonies / Event Announcer

Running, cycling and triathlon races/events these days are all about the EXPERIENCE. As one of the leading professional Race/Event Announcers in Endurance Sports races/events in North America, Steve is a major part of an event, helping to deliver on that experience. He informs, engages, energizes, entertains, and makes sure that participants, spectators, sponsors and other stakeholders ALL have a great and memorable experience on event day and that they all WANT to come back the following year! Over the course of many years, Steve has had the opportunity to work with many of the best event organizers in running, cycling and triathlon. He brings more than a great voice on the mic, his deep knowledge of best-practices at events will entertain and inspire everyone!



Carey Newman - Master Carver, Artist; Audain Professor, University of Victoria Visual Arts

Carey Newman, whose traditional name is Hayalthkin'geme, is a multi-disciplinary Indigenous artist, master carver, filmmaker, author and public speaker. Perhaps his most influential work, The Witness Blanket, made of items collected from residential schools, government buildings and churches across Canada, deals with the subject of Truth and Reconciliation. It is now part of the collection at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. "I consider myself a contemporary artist with a traditional soul. I try to innovate, creating movement while working within the conventions of tradition. I often try to distill things to their essence. I am rooted in past, looking to the future and trying to reflect the world that we live in today." -Carey Newman 2015



Rach McBride - Non-binary Gender Advocate

Rach has been racing full-time as a professional triathlete since 2011. Known as the "Purple Tiger," they are a three-time Ironman 70.3 Champion and have numerous podium and course record results across several distances in the sport. Deemed "the most interesting [person] in triathlon" by TRS Radio, Rach is the first professional triathlete to be out as gender non-binary. They hold two graduate degrees in genetics and are an accomplished cellist. Rach loves being a minimalist, spinning fire, and working in sexual health education and advocacy in beautiful Vancouver, Canada, where they live and train.



Gary Roethenbaugh - Managing Director, MultiSport Research

Gary Roethenbaugh is Managing Director of MultiSport Research, which was founded in 2010. He is a specialist in commercial consulting, market data, research and analysis. Over the past 10 years, his experience of the endurance sport industry has taken in areas as diverse as consumer research, market quantification and strategic advice.



Tim Dale - Swim Safety Expert

Tim is an experienced professional event manager; specializing in small to large-scale sport and recreation events across Australia, Canada, US and China. He has worked with non-profit and for-profit organizations across multiple roles, over the past 14 years with organizations that include IRONMAN Group, 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation, Whistler Blackcomb Events, Crankworx Events, Apple Triathlon Society, Whistler X Triathlon and many others. Tim leads teams in operational and emergency procedure planning, safety management, risk mitigation and key stakeholder relations, and has gained over 21 years of extensive water safety experience from his involvement with Surf Life Saving Australia and working on numerous swim courses from triathlon to surf lifesaving and surf sports events.



Ghislain Mélançon – Chief Operating Officer, World Triathlon Montreal

A trained engineer and recently retired from a large telecommunications company, Ghislain has a strong knowledge of triathlon as a Race Director, National Technical Official, and former president of Triathlon Québec. Ghislain is also the Chief Operating Officer of B3 Montreal, the Montreal Urban Festival and We Run Montreal!. He is involved in many races in the metropolitan region, such as the Triathlon of Verdun and the Triathlon of Lachine, Mud Hero, Classique Verdunoise.



Éric Noël – Race Director, World Triathlon Montreal

Éric has extensive experience in the world of sport. For the past 8 years, Eric has been the Technical Director of Triathlon Quebec. He has been involved in the organization of hundreds of sport events, including the Groupe Copley World Triathlon. He oversaw the management of the Triathlon Quebec calendar and was responsible for the technical officials program. He has also been able to develop and create, in partnership with the organizing committees, the Coupe Québec, Grand Prix and Super series, which are now the benchmarks of triathlon in Canada.



Chris Dornan – Communications Manager, Triathlon Canada

A leading communications advisor in Canada's sport community, Chris brings dedication, knowledge, creativity and passion to his work with amateur and professional athletes in a variety of sports over the last two decades. He has represented the country at seven Olympic and four Paralympic Games, along with countless major international events. He has worked tirelessly to help develop and share the powerful stories of Canada's triathlon community with the entire nation through mainstream, trades and social media.



Mike Clucas – Founder, FulGaz

FulGaz founder Mike Clucas was born in the UK and ended up traveling the world racing a bike. Settling in Australia in the 90's with an obsession for finding ways to make people go faster, he went to university and studied Sport Science and Exercise Physiology. The following decade was then devoted to coaching cyclists and triathletes; eventually setting up and up running the Victorian Institute of Sport Triathlon Program and working with the National Triathlon Team during the "golden years" of Australian Triathlon. Through his time as a coach, his role gradually shifted from developing new coaching techniques to looking for money for the program. Eventually, he transferred these skills to the emerging world of software for the internet. FulGaz is a fast growing, popular app with many thousands of users worldwide.



Dr. Marie-Claude Gregoire – Paediatrician & Medical Delegate, World Triathlon

Dr Grégoire is a paediatrician in Victoria, BC. She graduated with an MD and MSc from Université de Montreal in 1999 before taking residency in paediatrics and fellowship in pain and palliative medicine. Dr Grégoire is also a World Triathlon Level 2 technical official. Since 2015, she combines both her professional and volunteer lives as a medical delegate with World Triathlon at many levels, including the World Triathlon Series. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Dr Grégoire leads two Covid-19 assessment centres in Victoria, which allows her to bring a unique public health perspective to managing medical risk at large scale endurance sporting events at this unique time and has been invited by World Triathlon to present on this topic at their "Return to Events in the New Normal" webinar series over the summer of 2020.



Jonathan Gormick – Public Information Officer, Vancouver Fire Rescue

Jonathan has been a firefighter with Vancouver Fire Rescue Services for almost 18 years, and their Public Information Officer for more than five years, over which time he has provided over 1500 media interviews, overseen the department's social media accounts, and implemented a model that provides media 24/7 access to incident details. Jonathan has experience leading the department's external communications through large, prolonged, multi-agency incidents, on-going issues such as the opiate crisis, and day-to-day incidents that impact public safety. Jonathan raced road, track and cyclocross across North America, Europe, and Asia including World Cup events before realizing racing is hard and tiring.



Steve Indig – Partner, Sport Law & Strategy Group

Steve is a lawyer and sport law expert who has worked with over 650 national, provincial and local sport organizations providing consulting and legal services relating to governance, employment, contracts, policies, disputes, and privacy. Steve joined the Sport Law & Strategy Group as a Partner in 2003.



Rachel Macatee – Sport Development Officer, Triathlon Canada

Rachel joined the team at Triathlon Canada in 2017 as the events & teams manager, shifting into her current role as sport development officer in 2018. She has extensive experience working with endurance sports and event management in Canada. Prior to joining Triathlon Canada, she was a member of the logistics and operations management team for the 2017 ITU Multisport World Championships Festival in Penticton, BC and she was the race director for the 24 Hours of Adrenalin mountain biking event in Canmore, BC. Rachel also spent three years as the athlete services manager with Ironman for their western Canadian events, taking on a large role in all facets of the Subaru Ironman Western Canada Series.



Phil Mowatt – Chief Executive Officer, Interpodia Technology

Phil is the Co-Founder and CEO of Interpodia, and after years of collaboration, holds a firm grasp on the needs of triathlon clubs and events; as well as the user perspective as an athlete himself. Phil is also an outdoor enthusiast, proud father and a problem solver. CCN, powered by Interpodia, is a registration technology partner to Triathlon and Cycling federations and hundreds of events and clubs across Canada. Founded in Vancouver, BC in 2008, CCN provides modular web technology that has helped integrate triathlon events and clubs with their provincial bodies and Triathlon Canada. Through a collaborative approach they have proven to significantly reduce registration processing costs, enhance online interactions, reduce risk and streamline administrative processes.



Caroll Taiji – Brand Director, Taiji Brand Group

Caroll Taiji is a co-founder of Taiji Brand Group, an award-winning brand strategy firm started in 1988 as well as The ChangeRoom, a new creative thinking company that specializes in helping leaders of sport unlock the potential of their brands to grow trust, engagement and social impact. A skilled facilitator and creative strategist, Caroll is passionate about bringing clarity and courage to new ways of thinking and rallying people around the vision for a better future. She has lead transformative brand strategy processes for Triathlon Canada, Coaches Across Continents and more recently Nordiq Canada.