



Survey Summary Report

FEEDBACK

2017 Penticton ITU Multisport (Age Group World Championships)

Summary

2017 Penticton ITU Multisport (Age Group) World Championships

Age Group Athlete - Survey Results

Introduction

August 18th – 27th 2017, more than 3,500 athletes descended on Penticton, British Columbia to participate in the inaugural ITU Multisport World Championships. Of those athletes just over 900 were Age Group athletes representing Team Canada.

For Triathlon Canada, this represented by far the largest Age Group Team Canada in attendance at an ITU World Championship event. On average, when such events take place outside of Canada, the number of Age Group athletes ranges between 200 – 400.

As the largest age group Team Canada ever and with six events over 10 days it was a significant undertaking, which is why it was important to Triathlon Canada to solicit feedback from the athletes— not only about the Penticton event, but about the Age Group program in general. A survey was sent to all Team Canada Age Group athletes post Penticton and with 478 survey respondents, a response rate of close to 50% was achieved.

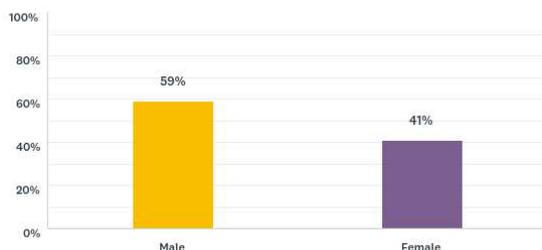
The following provides an overview of the survey responses. There is considerable information within these survey results which will help to inform program changes moving forward.

The Survey Respondents

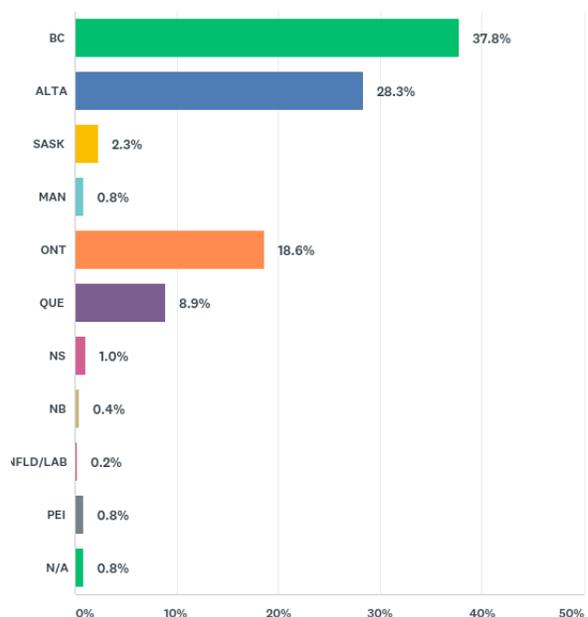
Every Triathlon Canada member province had Age Group Team Canada participants at these World Championships and each province is represented in these survey results.

- 59% of the respondents were male and 41% female

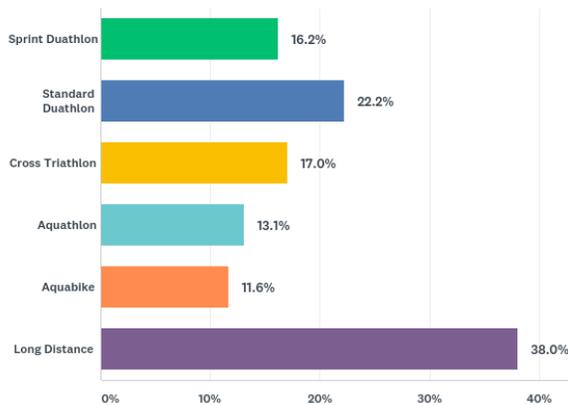
Q2 What gender category did you race in?



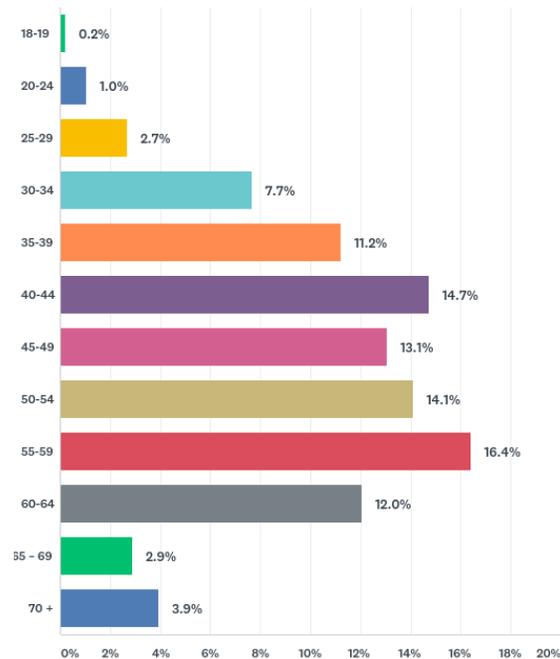
Q1 Where do you live (select province or, other)?



- every age category was represented
- each multisport discipline was represented



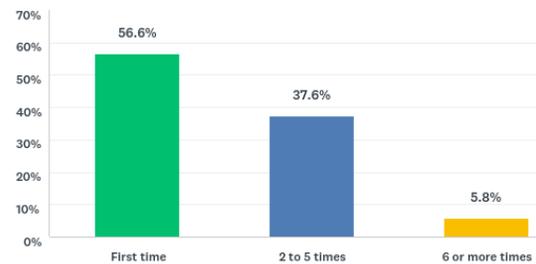
Q3 In which Age Category did you compete?



The majority of survey respondents (58%) ranged in age from 40 to 59.

When asked how many times they had competed as members of Age Group Team Canada, 57% of respondents indicated that they were competing as members of a Team Canada Age Group World Championships Team for the first time.

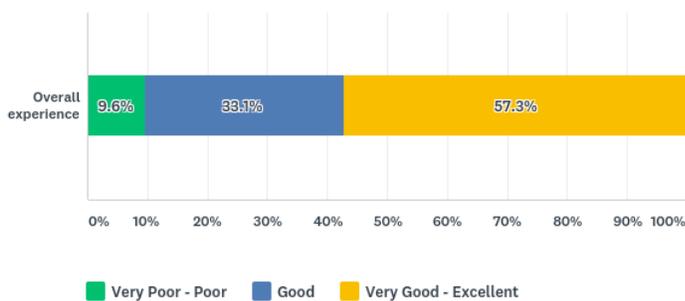
There were 43% who, having competed 2 or more times as members of a World Championship Age Group Team, were able to contribute to the survey as more seasoned Team Canada athletes with prior experiences to draw from and compare to.



The Athlete Experience

Athletes were asked to rate their overall experience at the 2017 Penticton ITU Multisport (Age Group) World Championships. 474 athletes responded to this and 90.4% rated their experience as “good”, “very good” or “excellent.” 9.6% rated their overall experience as “very poor” or “poor.”

Q6 Rate your overall experience.



Athletes were then asked to evaluate their 2017 Team Canada (Penticton) experience

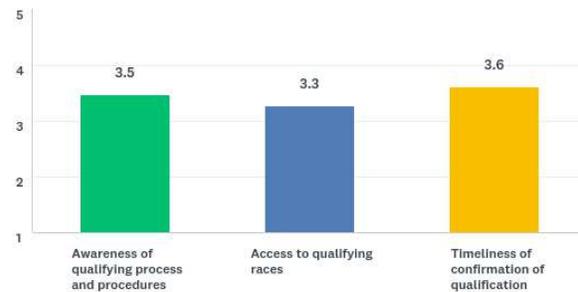
based on some key elements; qualifying process, registration process, and travel/accommodation. The responses are presented as weighted averages falling between 1 (very poor), 2 (poor), 3 (good), 4 (very good) and, 5 (excellent).

Qualifying Process

In terms of the Qualifying process, awareness of the process, access to qualifying races and the timeliness of confirmation of an athlete's qualification were queried. On each factor, using a weighted average athletes gave each a "good" to "very good" rating. 86 athletes provided specific comments that:

- noted a lack of qualifying opportunities in Western Canada (BC and Alberta, in particular);
- identified a need for qualifiers for Sprint Duathlon and, Aquabike, and;
- stressed the importance of getting qualifying information out as early as possible.

Q7 Qualifying Process (Weighted average)



"It would be nice and help grow the sport if a LD championship event or a LD qualifying event also had an Aquabike event available for qualifications."

"I'm very disappointed that for the third year in a row (at least), there haven't been any qualifying races in BC. There should be a minimum of 1 qualifying race per event each year in each province."

"It was hard to find Draft Legal races to qualify. I actually had to travel to Quebec to find one."

"Having a national multiport festival in 2016 was fantastic. Did not compete in any nationals in 2017 due to the events being split across multiple races/provinces. Would attend a National Multi Sport festival in future years if gave opportunity to complete in multiple National Championship races over a period of 5 to 8 days"

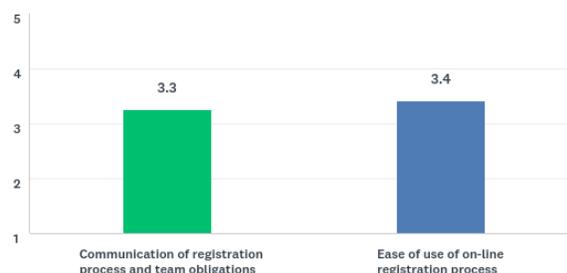
"It was really accidental that I learned about how to qualify for Team Canada"

"Announcement of qualifying races must be earlier as race calendars start to get filled in well ahead of announcement of races so can make scheduling problematic."

The Registration Process

Respondents were asked for feedback on the Athlete Registration Process in terms of "communication of the process and Team Canada participant obligations" and, the "ease of use of the on-line registration process." Again, ratings fell between "good" and, "very good." While most found the registration process fairly easy to use a few commented on specific challenges that

Q8 Registration Process (Weighted Average)



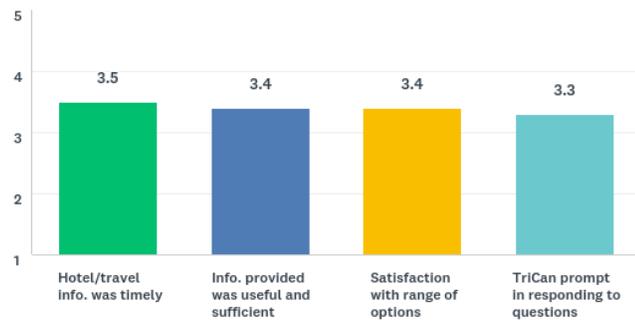
they had. In terms of communication, there were a number of comments related to the need to communicate up front and clearly, the total program costs that an Age Group Team Canada athlete can anticipate.

Travel and Accommodation

Most respondents were quite satisfied with the information received from Triathlon Canada on travel and accommodation options. The fact that this event took place in Canada was much different than international events in this regard. Many noted that they lived or had friends in the area, or they had been there before and were familiar with the area and therefore were quite comfortable making their own arrangements.

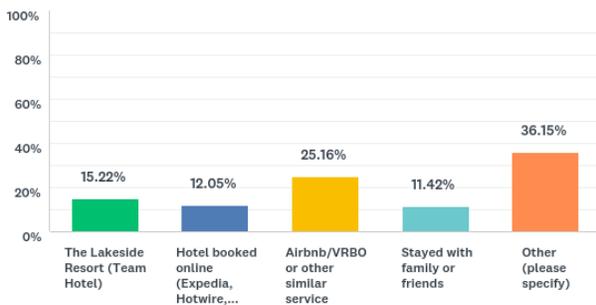
Only 7 of 469 respondents indicated that they booked their travel through Triathlon Canada’s travel partner – Flight Centre with a satisfaction rating between 3.0 and 3.3 out of 5 on each of the key parameters (rates, service, timeliness).

Q9 Travel and Accommodation (Weighted Average)



Only 72 respondents indicated that they stayed at the Lakeside Resort which was the designated Team Canada Hotel. As noted above, most athletes made their own arrangements and as provided in the comments, many chose some of the alternate locations provided by Triathlon Canada for two key reasons: cost, and the availability of kitchen facilities (which was not available at Lakeside Resort).

Q12 Where did you stay in Penticton?

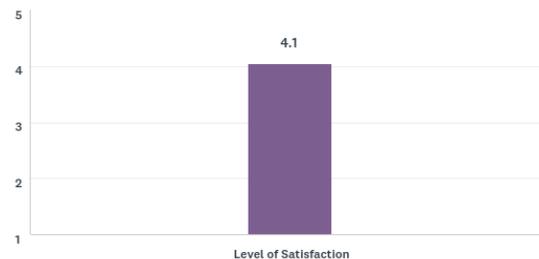


Many others indicated that they stayed in campgrounds/RV parks. The high cost of accommodation generally in Penticton during the event was noted by many respondents.

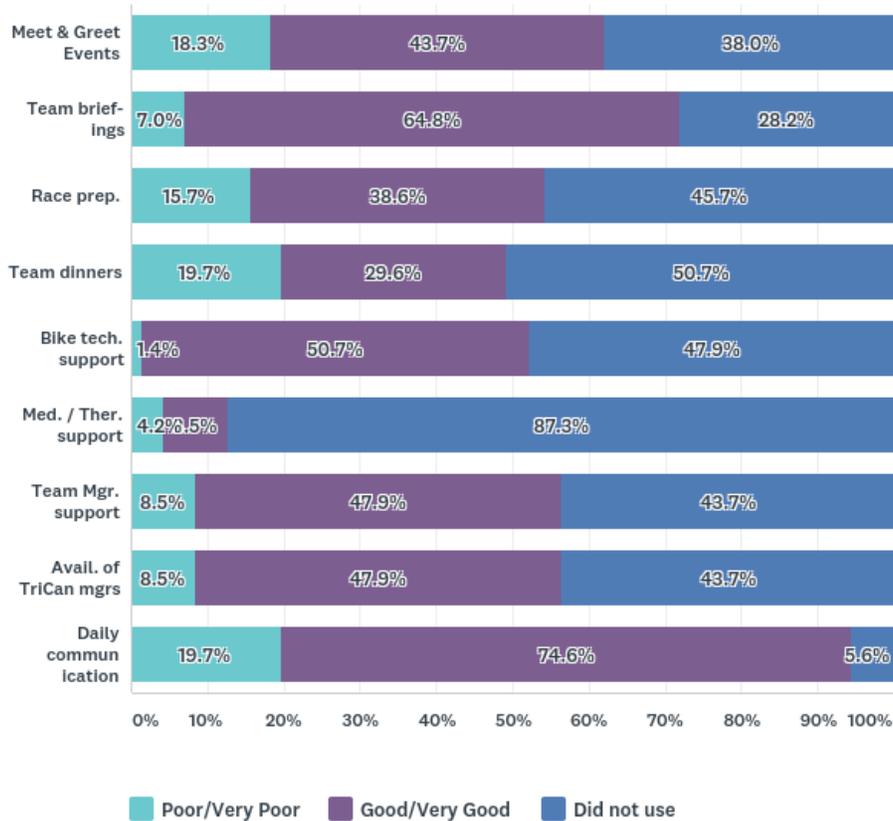
Of those who did stay at the Lakeside Resort, the feedback was excellent with an overall rating (weighted average) of 4.1 out of 5.

The location and convenience of access with the Resort being directly adjacent to the venue was received most favourably.

Q13 Level of Satisfaction with Team Canada Hotel?



Q14. Please rate your overall satisfaction with Team Canada Events and Support.



Only 71 athletes completed this question but, from those who did, the overall ratings in each of the key areas identified where people availed themselves of the opportunities, was for the most part rated “good” to “very good.” Areas for improvement are noted in: Communications, Meet and Greet events and the Team Dinners. On the latter two it is important to note that attendance at these events was very low in comparison to athlete numbers and in relation to what is usual when a team is travelling abroad.

Most significant is the number that indicated they “did not use” the services available. This is generally quite different than the levels of use experienced at Age Group Team Canada events that take place outside of Canada and provides a valuable learning opportunity relative to future Canadian ITU events.

Based on some of the feedback, there seemed to be a lack of awareness of the support services and team support that was available.

Sample of comments:

"Liked the experience better last year when all Team members were at the same hotel. Was too big to create this kind of magic this year."

"I was not aware of team briefings and race preparation support. If I had known I would have attend."

"I never really knew who the team manager was. I found the race briefing helpful and the meet and greet was a good initiative. I was able to follow and see the daily activities because I stayed at the main hotel, but if I hadn't I don't think I would've known what was going on."

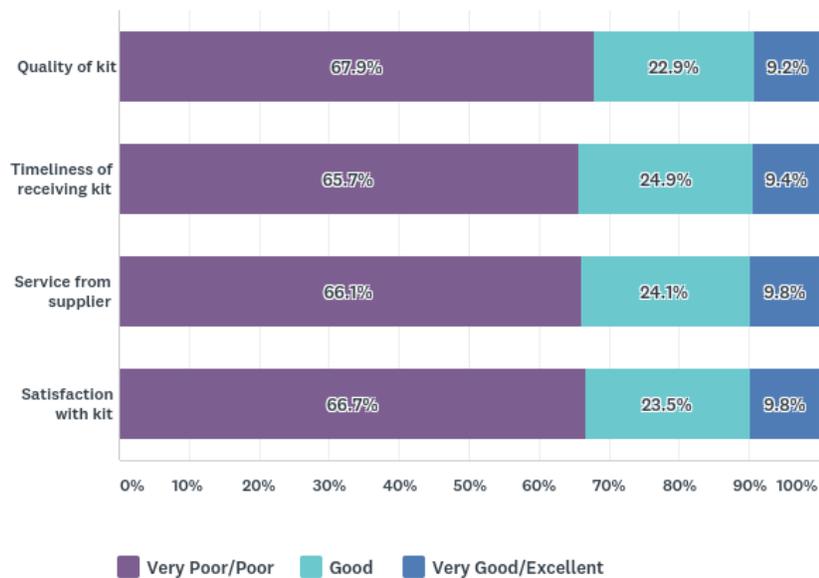
"Paying \$20 for my spouse for a few veggie & cold cuts, crackers & cheese was not great. How about feeding hungry athletes a simple pasta meal at the meet/greet with water/juice whatever and a fruit or two for dessert...pasta is an inexpensive but perfect endurance food..."

"Communication is a difficult one to solve, but the mix of FB, email, athlete guides, and message board is a really complex thing to navigate on the athlete end. The information is available, but the number of times I tried to remember where I read something, and then spent hours looking through emails, and FB posts, and athlete guides to try to find the info. it was so frustrating! I think the next step is trying to find a single source communication solution."

Team Canada Uniform Kit

The Team Canada kit was by far the most controversial item and the challenges faced by Team Canada Age Group athletes were a definite focus of the survey results and woven through the comments received through all the questions put forward in the survey. 466 athletes responded to the question on "Uniform Kit" in the survey and 291 of these respondents also provided comment in the "further comment" section.

Q15 Uniform Kit



On all four key factors queried, "Quality", "Timeliness", "Satisfaction" and "Service"; more than 65% of those responding to these questions rated these as "Very Poor or Poor"; 23% to 25% rated these areas as "Good", and; 10% gave these factors a rating of "Very Good" or "Excellent."

Overall, of the respondents to the survey, greater than 65% were dissatisfied with the Uniform kit and the service from the supplier. The areas of dissatisfaction highlighted in the 291 comments received have been organized into five key themes and are summarized as follows:

1. Cost of the Kit: There is a high level of dissatisfaction with the number of “mandatory” items that were required and the cost of this year’s kit. Many viewed this as completely unnecessary and some noted that it would be worth allowing for kit items to be used for multiple years.
2. Quality of the Kit: There were a significant number of comments/complaints related to sizing/fit, manufacturing issues, design, colours (red and black) and material durability (material fading/wear & tear).
3. Location of supplier/manufacturing: The use of a Non-Canadian Supplier is disappointing to many participants.
4. Customer relations: Lack of responsiveness/quality of service/timeliness of service from the Supplier was highlighted throughout and a serious source of frustration for the AG athletes.
5. Engagement of National Federation: Disappointment from a number of respondents with what was viewed as a lack of response/support from Triathlon Canada.

Sample of comments:

“The entire kit is the worst quality I have ever had in my years of doing triathlon. It is deeply disappointing to spend that amount of money on poorly produced items and low quality. When part of the registration process involves spending a minimum on kit items to register, the resulting garments should be excellent.”

“As many other athletes have noted, this year's kit was of inferior quality considering the price charged. The 2015 kit was by far the most aesthetically well designed as well as best quality. Tri Can should choose a different (Canadian) supplier for their future team kit, and make the price much more reasonable.”

“Poor quality of products for value of money spent. Delays in delivery of items. Colour of product not even a nice colour red. Items falling apart when worn only once.”

“I am disappointed that team Canada forces us to purchase a full new kit every year. Other countries change their kit every couple of years and offer the option to buy individual pieces. I have 4 kits and feel that Team Canada could do a much better job of making competing affordable. Unless this changes I probably will not join again.”

“Unfortunately, for the cost, the clothing was very poorly made, with cheap fabric that was well-worn after one use. Thankfully provider is willing to at least re-make jackets.”

“The red in the uniform is really not a Canadian red and was the same for Chicago - I think this is something which should be addressed.”

“All very good - with the exception of the jacket, which the supplier was proactive on.”

“This is my biggest pain point of my experience. I was excited to qualify and more excited to wear the team Canada gear...outsourcing to a company in Australia for a Canadian team made no sense, the quality was very poor, the red dye in each piece didn't match and was orange, the jacket dye (black) was so poor that when it stretched it looked grey/white ...considering the cost we paid for the "mandatory" pieces, I feel truly and completely ripped off!”

“The entire experience with the supplier was poor and unacceptable. The customer service provided by the supplier in Penticton was dreadful. They didn't seem to care about mix-ups and delays and did nothing really, other than to give out misinformation and point the finger at others, including the courier company. The kits and other clothing items are also of poor quality and the fit of many items was/is not consistent. In my case I was left with optional items that do not fit with no opportunity to exchange for ones that did fit. Also, why were our kits adorned with orange instead of red? Very frustrating and disappointing on many levels.....”

Q16 Please rate your level of satisfaction with the support from Triathlon Canada Management Team Members



443 athletes responded to this question and the range of responses provide valuable insight. As per comments noted in question 14, the most noteworthy statistic emanating from this survey question is the response that relates to “don’t know.” 40% to 70% of the athletes responding to this question indicated they did not know of the support people that were present during the event. In the comments, some respondents note that generally once they registered, they were comfortable looking after their own needs given the event was in Canada. Others were disappointed that they were not aware of this support suggesting communication was lacking; while some commented on their own independence and lack of need for support; and, some recognized the size of the 2017 team with over 900 participants and, the inability for staff to be visible to all. For those who did have contact with the various Team Support personnel, the feedback was positive with the majority of those respondents indicating their experience with the management team as “good,” or “very good / excellent.”

Sample of comments:

“The Management Team was awesome. They took good care of us and if they did not know an answer they would go and search out someone who did.”

“The athletes briefing was essential to attend and the Team FB page was critical in communication Those were the 2 places that I got the information I needed.”

“Most of the people I did not see or have contact with. I did not know they were at Penticton.”

“I managed to get myself sorted out through the team handbook provided online so I did not have any dealings with the team this year. Other years when we have been away, I always found our team managers very helpful and capable.”

“Not once did anyone from this list introduce themselves to me. I did not see or speak to a single Triathlon Canada Management team member.”

“I don’t really know who these people are. I just entered and raced. They must work behind the scenes. If so they did a good job.”

Q17 Name three things that could be improved upon for future Age Group Team events.

Suggestions provided numbered 1,092. Uniforms, High Costs and Communication were clearly the top three items. In terms of specific improvements noted, these included:

1. Uniforms
 - a. Changing the uniform supplier with many specifically stating a preference for a Canadian supplier
 - b. Allowing team kit items to be used over several years and reducing the number of mandatory or, “non-essential” items - to save cost for athletes
2. Reducing costs:
 - a. Overall, many commented on what they viewed as the cost prohibitive nature of the Age Group program. Many found the race fees to be very high and were not pleased with being charged in US dollars (ITU issue)
 - b. The cost of mandatory uniform items.
3. Communication
 - a. Improving communication in lead up to and during the event,
 - b. more direct communication channels / in person versus Facebook which some do not use.
 - c. Better communication upfront of program costs and qualification information
4. Team Environment
 - a. The creation of a stronger sense of “team” through better year-round and daily event communication and more mingling type events. Food, cost (for friends of family) of Meet and Greets was raised as an issue by some.
5. Overall Length of the Event
 - a. Some felt a tighter schedule might have been offered requiring them to be away from work less and making the event somewhat more affordable.

Many more suggestions were provided that are quite worth consideration. These will be reviewed in more detail as Triathlon Canada looks to the future.

Moving Forward

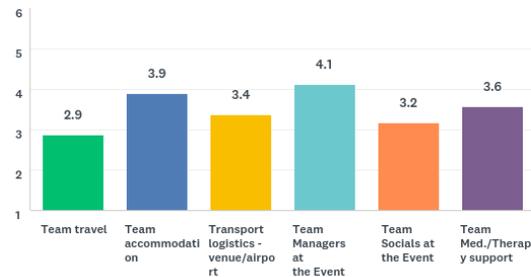
The following was a section of questions put to the Age Group Team Canada athletes with respect to the program moving forward. The purpose of this section was two-fold – to educate, and to seek input on program changes that might be required moving forward.

The information and commentary that was provided in this section will be important for future planning. A summary is provided below.

Age Group Team Canada - Program Priorities

This first question provided an opportunity to explain why the Age Group program is largely “self funded” and the support that is currently provided by Triathlon Canada. The highest weighted average represents the “highest priority” and the lowest weighted average represents what respondents viewed as the “lowest priority”.

Q18 Sport Canada is Triathlon Canada's major funder and primarily restricts its support to programs on the Olympic/Paralympic pathway and youth participation. For this reason the Age Group Program is largely self-funded. Triathlon Canada is responsible for: setting qualifying standards, managing selection; managing entries/payments/changes; arranging team uniforms/design; and, handling event media/promotions. If you had to prioritize the type of support that you receive from TriCan, how would you rank the following in order of priority from 1 (highest priority) to 6 (lowest priority).

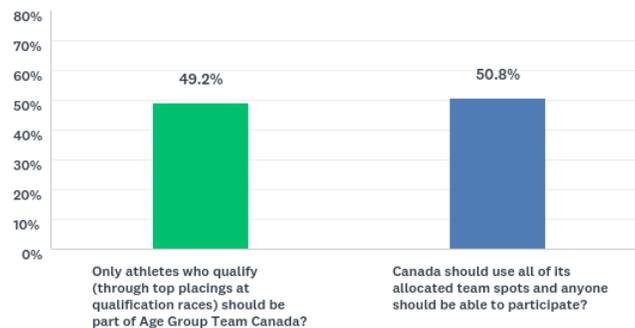


From the data, having team managers at the event and arranging team accommodation were seen as the two higher priorities. Viewed by respondents as lower priorities were organizing team travel and team socials. Other factors are less easily discernible however, in addition to the Triathlon Canada responsibilities listed in the question itself, the rankings indicate the priorities in the following order:

1. Team managers at the event
2. Organizing team accommodation
3. Arranging access to medical and therapy support
4. Organizing local transportation
5. Organizing team social events, and
6. Organizing team travel

Age Group Team Canada - Selection

Q19 Canada is entitled to 20 team spots (by gender/age category) as per ITU rules. Currently, Canadian Age Group Team spots are allocated first to those who automatically qualify (through top placings at qualification races) and remaining spots are allocated on a first come, first serve basis to other age group athletes who meet certain criteria. Do you think (please select one):



The response on this question is clearly split down the middle. A higher percent (only slightly) of our Age Group athletes feel that Canada should allocate all of the team spots and open these up should they not be taken by qualifying athletes. This question did not display a comment option however, comments provided through other parts of the survey do provide some insight into these answers.

There is extremely strong emotion for some Age Group athletes around the sense of pride that is linked to having “qualified” and the diminishment of this that results when the door is then open for anyone to compete. On the other side, where there is support for ensuring all spots are allocated, a number of athletes added comments in other areas of the survey that there should be a priority allocation or a minimum standard, as opposed to the concept of “anyone being able to participate.”

There is clearly strong sentiment around the value and pride of being part of this program and wearing the Team Canada uniform.

Sample of comments:

“I do feel and got a sense that this really wasn't a National Team - it was for anyone who wanted to attend and could afford to pay. When you start opening up spots to people who did not qualify at a qualifying event you water down the sense of accomplishment for those who did qualify. The World Championships are all about having your best there, that is why there is a citizen's race.”

“Wasn't happy to hear that some athletes who didn't go to a qualifier were able to pay a fee and enter the race, buy team Canada kits and race in the age group category. What's the point in qualifying, if you can just pay money and get in. I know this happened in the Aquabike.”

“Standards are WAY too low for qualification. Should be within some percentage of the (AG) winner's time to qualify, not just 4 or 5 spots guaranteed. The Duathlon is not big enough to yet to roll down that many spots and have good talent to represent us.”

“...answered that only automatically qualified athletes should be part of team Canada...BUT, there are currently much less than 20 qualifying spots from races across the country for sprint DU. So, I want to qualify, but need to be given an opportunity to do so (for e.g. in events where 5-10 spots are available).”

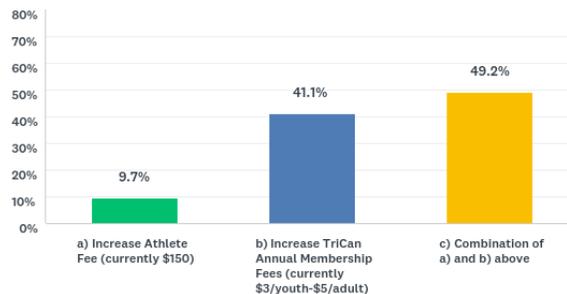
“I also think that minimum time standards ought to be implemented to World Championship events. Weak fields at some races meant EVERY ATHLETE in some age groups qualified, even if they have a 2+hour sprint duathlon time. That's not WC quality. Have more qualifying races throughout Canada.”

« Je crois qu'il faut considerer les competitions des groupes d'age sous une optique recreative et non competitive. Nous organisons nos vacances autour de ces evenements et nous visitons les regions ou ils ont lieu. Nous nous entrainons serieusement mais les resultats ont moins d'importance que de demeurer en sante, partager du bon temps avec des amis, et faire partie d'un gorup de personnes qui a la meme passion que nous. Our, nous representons le Canada, mais nous ne sommes pas aux Olympiques dans un climat de rivalite et de competition. Mon uniforme me permet d'entrer en contact avec des athletes d'autres pays. Que je les batte pendant la competition n'a pas vraiment d'importance. »

“Athletes of all levels should be allowed to compete whether they qualify or not, bucket list was achieved due to a roll down slot and made my summer”

Funding for the Age Group Team Canada Program

Q20 Currently Age Group Program costs exceed program revenue and unfortunately the program is not sustainable at current levels of team support. Some of the options being considered by Triathlon Canada are listed below. Please identify the option that you would most support.



This was a “closed” question that require respondents to select one of the three options. Some athletes elected not to respond to this question, others responded and further commented (151 individual comments) to clarify their views.

49.2% supported option c) which proposed a lift to both the Athlete Fee and the Triathlon Canada Annual Membership Fees and 41.1% supported increasing the Triathlon Canada Annual Membership fee only. Few supported increasing the Athlete Fee only to support the Age Group program (9.7%). Many Age Group athletes are concerned that increasing Athlete Fees would layer onto what they see as an already expensive program (for the individual athlete) and create a major deterrent to participation.

Feedback can be summarized in the following key points:

- Clearly, cost was a significant issue for many participants – so much so that some said they would not participate in future age group championship events. Heavily weighing into this was the experience this year with uniforms and the cost of the athlete kits and the number of mandatory items.
- Some noted the low Triathlon Canada Membership fee and suggested that this (the Adult Fee in particular) could be increased to provide broader support for the “participation stream” for age group athletes.
- There is a perception from some that the Age Group program is a revenue generator for Triathlon Canada and that revenues from this program are being diverted to other areas.
- Some did not oppose the concept of an increase but expressed interest in receiving more information and Triathlon Canada providing greater transparency in terms of financial resources and program support requirements.
- Some suggested that alternate sources of revenue needed to be explored (ie. Sponsorship)

Sample of comments:

"I find it too expensive to race in the Age Group program especially after buying the kit. I most likely will not go another World event just because of the cost, particularly if I can race in an open wave."

"With small increases in both areas it would not make someone not wish to participate as part of the Age Group Team and would not be a huge jump in one particular fee."

"Yes of course you should not be losing money with age-groupers. So, I would say an annual fee of \$10 for youth and \$25 for adults is legitimate and reasonable and affordable. Age group team Canada of 150 or 175 acceptable."

"The team fee of \$150 is very reasonable. Where the costs get a little bit much are the race fees (which is out of your control) and the team kit. Increasing the team fee to say \$200 would be ok if the race kit cost was say, \$250ish. Perhaps the mandatory team kit would just be our uniforms and a team shirt? and if people want to buy a jacket etc., it could be available but optional?"

"I think the athletes attending should support their costs, not everyone."

"Annual membership fees are way too low."

"Reduce the cost to Age Group Team Canada Athletes by allowing previous Team Canada uniforms to be used."

"The current \$150 is reasonable for the level of support that Triathlon Canada provides and I don't have an issue with paying more. I think the problem is once all fees and expenses are added participating in the WCs is not cheap. Increases in Athlete Fees should if possible be partially offset by reducing the mandatory uniform costs, allowing uniform reuse, etc."

"I honestly think that Age Group fees / self-funding is a major revenue stream for TriCan and it is all our fees and uniform costs that prop up revenues to support other program categories..."

"If it is not sustainable then the money is not being spent properly, costs to attend this event were far higher than any real event we have attended in the past and this will likely be the one and only time we attend based on the cost/reward."

"None of the above. It is already too expensive to represent our country. We need to go the other way and find more sponsorship to make the experience cost friendly to the athletes. This is why most of our best athletes do not attend. They cannot afford it year after year."

Final Comments

The final question of the survey was open ended allowing participants to share any final thoughts or comments. 248 provided comments in addition to those offered throughout the survey. Many of these were focussed on the issue of uniforms and improvements needed in this area. Many others used this section to take the time to reinforce the importance of the Age Group Team Canada program and to thank Triathlon Canada staff for their efforts.

Some of the final comments are highlighted as follows:

“Although my review is largely negative, I really LOVE competing for Canada. I am grateful we have Triathlon Canada that makes it possible to participate in my hobby at an international level. I believe there are opportunities for improvement, particularly as those folks who are racing are also investing huge amounts of time and \$ to represent Canada as well!”

“This was my fourth entry in the World AG Championships on the Canadian team. Overall, the experiences have been a great success and the Triathlon Canada staff has done a very good job of organizing and managing the program. This year was a disaster for many as concerns the uniform as no doubt many participants have pointed out. The problems must be sorted out and not be repeated. Every year we have new uniforms. Is it necessary to replace all of the kit with a new item every year?”

“Thank you for all the hard work that went into the race planning and logistical operations. The process of becoming a member of Team Canada is hard fought by everyone who attempts it and to make the team is a huge source of pride. I hope that any changes made by Triathlon Canada to the qualifying process is in the spirit of the dedication and hard work that triathletes put into qualifying races and the world champs.”

“I hope it continues forward, it's a cool experience and a proud feeling to represent your country, but very expensive to continue to be a part of it consecutive years for sure! A designation for those who actually qualify would be nice - instead of lumping everyone together, I would have done all the events had it been more cost effective - a lot of athletes felt that way...”

“For the most part it was a tremendous experience that you facilitated. I believe that keeping qualifying open to more is a good idea since that is how I became a member of the team. It is a great cost to travel to these events so I believe getting a large amount of people to be part of the team is a wonderful idea, so long as they meet some basic criteria.”

« Merci! Je vie des beaux moments grace a vous. »