



Q & A with Triathlon Coach Chris Lang

SHELDON Triathlon Club Coach, Chris Lang is renowned the world over as a passionate coach with a keen eye for future stars while maintaining an awareness of the rich history and tradition of triathlon in Australia.

Athletes under his tuition have won countless world, national and state titles and championships across triathlon, duathlon and all school-based competitions.

With Sheldon Triathlon Club Members, headlined by College student Joanne Miller, stealing the show at the ITU World Duathlon Championships in Adelaide last month, Lang shared the secrets behind the club's success with the College community.

These astounding results are testament to the world class coaching available to athletes within the Sheldon Triathlon Club program, which caters to athletes of all levels of ability.

Triathlon Australia's unique partnership with Sheldon College - Australia's first Triathlon School of Excellence offers school-aged students the unique opportunity to develop their triathlon talents under the direction of the Triathlon Australia Athletic Development Program.

Q: What are Jo Miller's best abilities that make her so successful, be they physical or mental or both?

A: Jo is a natural athlete and has achieved in a number of sports including netball, touch football, AFL, track and field, cross country, triathlon and duathlon which is a huge benefit as she is very quick with all skill acquisition exercises and because of her strong team sport background Jo is also very strong at 'reading the play' in many competitive environments and this is a very difficult ability to teach. Because of her dynamic sports background Jo is also very fast with plenty of intestinal fortitude so she never gets outsprinted - combine this diverse sports vocabulary and you have a very well rounded athlete who will improve every year she stays committed to her dreams and goals.

Q: How important has the Sheldon College program been for her success?

A: Without the partnership between Sheldon College and Triathlon Australia I am positive Jo would have still been a capable athlete but being able to develop as quickly as she has is a direct result of the Triathlon Australia School of Excellence at Sheldon College, Jo has achieved multiple state Triathlon titles a National Youth Championship silver medal and Australian Duathlon Championship (plus her world title last weekend) because of the

pathway provided by our strong program that combines academic excellence and sports pathways to ease the pressures some school age athletes face while trying to complete their education while they race and train at the highest level.

Q: The ground-breaking partnership between Triathlon Australia and Sheldon College is already reaping benefits across a broad spectrum of age groups, how important will that be in the ongoing development of Sheldon athletes?

A: Triathlon Australia has invested heavily in developing underpinning programs and the fruits of their labour are coming to fruition with a number of Under-23 world champions, a youth Olympics gold medallist and strong junior representation since 2011 when the National Talent Academy was formed, this pathway has provided a link to the very competitive senior elite level of racing. There are a number of athletes in the Sheldon College Triathlon Australia School of Excellence who have shown promise with multiple state and national champions in our program. Jo Miller winning a World Title confirms she is a highly talented athlete capable of progressing as far as she would like in our sport and we all look forward to watching her pursue her goals.



Q: How many hours would the program-based athletes train per week?

A: Each program is tailored individually for each athlete but training is typically very dynamic and balanced with the students' academic responsibilities so we pay careful attention to their total workload and life balance. With triathlon being such an aerobically demanding sport, we won't see the students reach their peak until their late 20's so we have a number of years to build their swimming, cycling and running volume.

We work very hard on developing their movement vocabulary and skill set and as these areas of development are catered for we will further develop more specific elements of swim, bike and run progression. Most athletes train up to 14 times per week but it is equally important for us to recognise the demands on our student athletes and allow them time to socialise and be normal people.